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Violent protests erupt in Middle East

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Palace says ARMM was a failed experiment

BUSINESS / B1
Overseas Filipinos sent $18.8B in 2010

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Rushes: Mogul's son eyes pretty starlet

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED

BIG FISH Top communist leader Alex Jaramillo is taken to the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame, Quezon City, from Camp Aleja Samon, Bataan, on Tuesday. MJ, A1 A

Fall of top Red clouds 'strategy of the brave'

THE PHILIPPINE government and communist rebels resumed peace talks near the Norwegian capital of Oslo on Tuesday after more than six years, but prospects remained uncertain after the arrest hours earlier of Alan Jazmines, a top guerrilla leader.

"Dialogue is not a sign of weakness. It is a strategy of the brave. It opens doors," Norway's Deputy Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide told delegates and reporters in opening comments on Tuesday at a Norwegian hotel overlooking the icy Oslo fjord.

The stand-down talks for seven days, the first since August 2004, are not expected to produce immediate results to end an insurgency that dates back to the late 1960s, but the two sides could agree to hold more negotiations and prolong a ceasefire.

MLQ, A1 A

SC: Impeach Gutierrez

Palace: COA chair has to go

By Christine O. Avendaño

We are not an Arroyo court, says Marquez

FACING THE MUSIC Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is dealt a legal blow by the Supreme Court in her fight against her impeachment at the House of Representatives.

By Marlon Ramos

THE IMPEACHMENT of Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is now a distinct possibility.

Voting 7-5, with two justices partially concurring with the majority and one abstaining, the Supreme Court yesterday threw out Gutierrez's petition seeking to declare unconstitutional the impeachment proceedings against her in the House of Representatives.

"The court en banc ... has dismissed the petition of the Ombudsman, thereby effectively allowing the [House] Justice committee to proceed with the impeachment proceedings," Malou Mangrobang, the high court's spokesperson and administrator, said at a news briefing.

Marquez also told the [illegible] that the ruling was proof of the justices' independence from any individual or political group.

"In many sessions of the court, it has already shown that it is not, as what many say, an Arroyo court," he said.

Petitioner by [illegible] Associate Justice Conchita Carpio-Morales, the ruling was issued exactly five months after the ill-fated hearing the justices summoned them hearing two impeachment complaints against Gutierrez.

Marquez said the ruling "effectively lifted" the status quo ante order issued by the high court on Sept. 14, 2010, to stop Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas Jr. and the justice committee that he chairs from discussing the impeachment complaints.

But Marquez said that Gutierrez still had 15 days to file an appeal, and that it would be "more prudent" for the lawmakers to wait for the high court's final decision before starting the impeachment proceedings.

In a statement, the Office of the Ombudsman said Gutierrez had yet to receive the official copy of the high court's ruling.

"Pending such receipt, the Ombudsman is still studying her options, including the filing of a motion for reconsideration."

NONA, A4 A

Solon invokes honor among thieves in House debate

By Cl C. Cabacungan Jr.

"IF THERE is honor even among thieves, there should also be honor among the representatives of the people."

Ilocos Norte Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas yesterday made the plea in an apparent bid to stop fellow members of the House of Representatives from hurling insults at each other.

Fariñas spoke during a hearing of the House committee on ethics on proposals for the suspension

ALSON, A5 A

Comelec's 1st: Exec charged with sabotage

By Jocelyn R. Uy

DepEd smitten by Azkals to develop football talents

By Tara Quimundo

NO. 1 FOR 25 YEARS Philippine Daily Inquirer chair Marixi R. Prieto (third from right) is joined on the [illegible] by (from left) Connie Kalaw-Tirol, PDI corporate affairs manager; Nilda Diron, SM vice president for marketing and communications; Isagani Yambot, Inquirer publisher; Raven Bacani, regional operations manager, SM Shopping Center Management Corp.; and Sandy P. Bartolome, PDI president.

Typewriter, what's that? Visit '25 Years of Inquirer'

By Julie M. Aurelio

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016

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DOJ eyes wider probe of AFP

By Nikko Dizon and TJ Burgonio

JUSTICE Secretary Leila de Lima yesterday said she was considering conducting an extensive investigation into military corruption that would go beyond the testimonies of the whistle-blowers, retired Col. George Rabusa and former government auditor Heidi Mendoza.

"This would be extensive, looking into those specific anomalies mentioned by them and others that may be uncovered in all of these," De Lima told reporters.

She said she would create a special team to gather evidence on alleged military corruption other than those revealed by Rabusa and Mendoza.

The members of the team will evaluate the evidences and build up or strengthen it before they are assigned to separate panels that would conduct the preliminary investigation and perfect opportunity to find the truth). I think the people would reject or are expecting something very extreme that would come out from all of those [so] that the members of the whistle-blowers and witnesses would not get to counter," she said.

As wide as possible'

De Lima said the investigation could "go as wide as possible," adding that she had received "feelers" from intermediaries "sent to get to the bottom of this."

It will be independent of the investigations being conducted by the Senate and the defense department.

Asked if President Aquino had entertained in her talks with the alleged anomalies in connection of the plunder suspect, former military comptroller Carlos Garcia, De Lima said there had been discussions "without actually naming names."

Mr. Aquino said the other day that he had "ideas" about who was protecting Garcia, who is accused of amassing P303 million in unexplained assets and whose controversial jobs bargain with state prosecutors is being investigated.

De Lima said identifying people without strong evidence would make difficult for the justice department to justify why their names had been mentioned in the first place.

She stressed that it was important that there should be economic evidence against anyone who would be implicated.

"Let's wait for the facts and evidence first and then we can start running matters because this would now become matters of public record," she said.

Palace priority

Meanwhile, Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said yesterday going after the protector or protectors of Garcia was a priority for Malacañang.

"It is a priority for us to go against all those who enriched themselves with impunity while they were public officials. This is something that we will not let go," Lacierda told reporters.

He said the government was now "colluding" the evidence against Garcia's protectors.

"In due time some (here's an) picture evidence, we will identify the personalities and the proper cases," he said.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said Malacañang's evidence should be "clear and unassailable" to avail in court.

"If they have a lead, that is not evidence yet. A lead is a lead, it's only a suspicion that will become a reality if evidence is gathered," he told reporters.

Garcia protector

"But your mere speculation, mere sometimes statement to an television will you have presented concrete proof that indeed somebody is protecting General Garcia," he told reporters.

He said Garcia cannot be compelled to divulge his protector in the Senate, even in an executive session, since the identity of his protector has not been established.

"I don't know whether you can compel him. You have to establish that there is a protector and just on the say-so of anybody," Enrile told reporters.

"In the first place, there was no one who has presented a formal allegation that there was somebody protecting him," he said.

"You can probably ask him, 'Is there anyone protecting you?' If he says 'None,' that's the end of the matter," Enrile said.

Lacierda also said the government will make a formal request to the United Nations for assistance in investigating the alleged means of UN peacekeeping funds intended for Filipino soldiers sent to East Timor.

"We are passionate about our anticorruption promise and part of our commitments is to get to the bottom of corruption allegations in the military," he said.

With Christine Avendaño

Heidi to youth: Don't pressure your parents into stealing

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49 Years... and CALOOCAN is at its BEST

President Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III swearing in Caloocan City Mayor Enrico "Recom" Echiverri as Chairman of the League of Cities of the Philippines in Malacañang.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

More classrooms mean less congestion in the halls. Students, providing better opportunities for learning. Mayor RECOM has provided 307 new classrooms since 2008.

The additional classrooms brought down the number of students per class per shift (morning-afternoon) to just 50 students from around 65 during the time of the former mayor.

Aside from the continuous improvement of its main campus in Samson Road, a four-storey building with 52 classrooms was erected to benefit 6,000 students in Kaunlaran. University of Caloocan City (UCC)-Camarin, UCC continues to offer affordable yet quality education, producing board passers (with scores above the national average) in the fields of accountancy, criminology and education.

Caloocan City also used advances in information technology to make different transactions easier and better. The city under the leadership of RECOM became the first ever LGU in the country to make use of an on-line business permits licensing system. Even the civil registry of Caloocan was given the high tech upgrade as all civil registry documents have now been computer-encoded, facilitating easier access and better safekeeping of these documents.

Caloocan City Liga ng mga Barangay President Cmdr. Reynaldo Javier "RJ" Echiverri is sworn into office by President Benigno Aquino as the President of the Liga ng mga Barangay ng Pilipinas at the SMX Convention Center, Pasay City.

reinstallation has so far laid down 273,242 linear meters of roads and pathways, more than four times that of the previous administration.

Mayor RECOM likewise built 124 covered courts between 2008 and 2013 compared to the former administration only managed to build 17 covered courts in nine years.

All in all, some infrastructure 306 projects covering roads, drainages, covered courts, bridges, multi-purpose halls, streetlights, barangay halls, bicycle lanes and

CARING FOR CONSTITUENTS AND CITY HALL WORKERS

The RECOM administration has never shortchanged its constituents when it comes to social welfare services. Since 2004, the local government has distributed a total of 43,909 Senior Citizen Cards, 96,108 medical booklets and 107,323 grocery booklets.

Indigent residents of the city, particularly those who have no house to call their own, have benefitted from socialized housing programs — over 62,000 families now have roofs over their heads.

As the people of Caloocan celebrate 49th Cityhood Foundation Anniversary today, one can't help but the historic is now at its best — its status as a local government unit never been higher in its 49 years of history.

In fact, people agree that it has been reformed as one of the PREMIER CITY in the country today.

This transformation, which continues to this day, is the

LEGACY being built by Caloocan Mayor Enrico "RECOM" Echiverri. Ever since assuming the local chief executive's post in 2004, Echiverri has distinguished himself from the track record of the former local executive, by being both a REFORMER and PERFORMER.

Echiverri's brand of leadership has been acknowledged by his peers, particularly with his position as chairman of the League of Cities in the Philippines (LCP). This feat is only matched by his son, Caloocan City Councilor Richard "RJ" Echiverri, who was recently re-elected as president of the Liga ng mga Barangay sa Pilipinas.

The most advanced, state-of-the-art medical equipments were purchased for use by hospitals in the city, including the President Diosdado Macapagal Memorial Medical Center (PDMMMC). Meanwhile, Caloocan City residents are offered free medical services such as check-ups, cleft lip palate surgeries, vaccinations for pets, circumcision for teenage boys and dental services, among others.

Early December, Mayor RECOM forever etched himself in the hearts of city hall employees by becoming the first mayor in Caloocan's history to ever release a 14th month pay, further reflecting the local government's stance.

Some 32,000 local residents were hired on the spot in the 31 job fairs that RECOM has roamed out as the

Figures in employment generation also saw a huge jump in the RECOM administration. In just two terms, some 130,561 job vacancies have been advised for re-posting in Caloocan, wherein 41,940 applicants have been

Mayor RECOM has overturned the once dreary image of Caloocan through a continuous stream of progressive projects in the fields of business, education, social welfare services, peace and order as well as livelihood and employment for his constituents.

ORDERLY, PEACEFUL AND PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY

The Caloocan City Police Station has consistently posted high Crime Solution Efficiency (CSE) rates. In 2010, the local police force achieved 88.12 percent in CSE, which is on par with the National Capital Region (NCR) rate of 89 percent.

Its performance can be attributed to the city government's staunch and unwavering support to the Caloocan PNP in the form of new mobile patrol vehicles, firearms, ammunition, communication equipment and even additional allowances.

Peace and order paves the way for numerous infrastructure projects, a sign of a progressive community. The RECOM ad-

RENEWED AND INCREASED BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

Since he took office, business started and has continued to boom in Caloocan providing a right path for development.

From only 6,000 business investments gained by the past administration, RECOM, in only his first two terms, has more than doubled it to 17,904 business investments. This has translated to a 100 percent increase in revenue, reaching up to P574.7 million.

Renewed confidence from the business sector has also meant improved financial performance by the city government, resulting in more projects. Total collection for the local government's General Fund in 2010 reached P3 billion, doubling the collection in 2004.

placed.

Aware that manpower programs are a worthy investment for the city's development, Recom has pushed for skills training seminars which had been participated by 36,213 individuals. Livelihood training seminars, on the other hand, listed as much as 70,522 participants.

Local residents themselves attest that RECOM's legacy of public service will serve as the yardstick, by which future leaders in Caloocan City will be measured. The same legacy is seen to cement the notion that Caloocan, now on its 49th year as a city is definitely at its best. But there's more, much more to expect from Mayor Recom—Caloocan's public servant extraordinaire.

No TRO: SC says Ecleo can be arrested

By Marlon Ramos

ECLEO

THE SUPREME Court yesterday said authorities can arrest Dinagat Islands Rep. Midsen Ecleo Jr. since the court has yet to act on his petition seeking to nullify the arrest warrant issued against him by the Sandiganbayan.

Speaking in a news conference, Supreme Court spokesman and administrator Midas Marquez admitted that Ecleo's petition for a temporary restraining order (TRO) was "complicated."

Apparently, (Ecleo) filed two petitions before the court. It's the first petition, it was already dismissed and in fact, the entry of judgment has already been made (last year)," Marquez told reporters.

"That's why the court was surrounded in the Sandiganbayan which issued a warrant of arrest against him," he added.

Ecleo had also filed a motion for reconsideration in connection with another case, Marquez said.

He said the court was still reviewing Ecleo's second petition "that's why (it) has not yet acted on (the relatively urgent) matter" that the embattled lawmaker filed last Friday.

"Since there is no TRO, there is no stopping (the enforcement of the arrest warrant)," Marquez said.

Considered the "supreme master" of the mid-Philippine Benevolent Illuminators Association, Ecleo was ordered arrested by the antigraft court after he was convicted of three counts of graft.

The cases stemmed from the irregularities in the multi-million peso infrastructure projects when he was still mayor of the small coastal town of San Jose, Surigao del Norte from 1995 to 1998.

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6th Week in Ordinary Time
Is 1 1:1-10, 13-18, 14-15, 18-19
Ps 50:8, 16bc, 17, 21ab, 23 (cf. 23b)
Lk 6:39-42

Lord, I will offer a sacrifice of praise.

1st Reading: Gen 6:5-8, 7:1-5, 10-23

At the end of the forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had built and let the crows out. This went off and kept flying to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.

Then Noah let out the dove to see if the waters were receding from the earth. But the dove could not find a place to set its foot and flew back to him to the ark for the waters still covered the surface of the whole earth. So Noah stretched out his hand, took hold of it and brought it back to himself to the ark. He waited some more days and again sent the dove out from the ark. This time the dove came back to him in the evening with a fresh olive branch in its beak.

Then Noah knew the waters had receded from the earth. He waited seven more days and let the dove loose, but it did not return to him any more. In the year six hundred and one, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and looked out and saw that the surface of the earth was dry.

Noah built an altar to Yahweh and, taking some of every clean animal and all the clean birds, he offered burnt offerings on it. Yahweh smelled the pleasing aroma and said to himself: "Never again will I curse the earth because of man, even though his heart is set on evil from childhood, never again will I strike down every living creature as I have done.

As long as the earth lasts, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease to be."

Gospel: Mk 8:22-26

When Jesus and his disciples reached Bethsaida, some were asked to touch a blind man who was brought to him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had put spittle on his eyes and laid his hands upon him, he asked, "Can you see anything?" The man, who was beginning to see, replied, "I see people. They look like trees, but they move around." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again and the man could see perfectly. His sight was restored and he could see everything clearly. Then Jesus sent him home saying, "Do not return to the village."

Reflection:

I was tired to walk until my eyes closed so *that* how it was to be blind. It was difficult. I bumped into many obstacles while I continued to prepare to sense where I was going. Sometimes blind but so helpless though they are not see anything? There are times in our life that we, too, are unable to see and make sense of what is happening to us. May we have faith in Jesus who, in time, brings with his touch clear vision to us.

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Abrasive? Trillanes just learning the ropes–Enrile

By TJ Burgonio

MAKING HERE groaned amazing for coup plotting and now already cornered by parliamentary immunity neophyte Sen. Antonio Trillanes cannot be censored by anybody according to Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile.

"He's now covered by a different rule. As a member of the Republic, he can't be questioned on any speech or debate done by him inside the confines of the Senate as a senator," said Enrile.

Trillanes, a former junior Navy officer, has come under fire from his Philippine Military Academy (PMA) alma mater, for his rude treatment of the late Gen. Angelo Reyes when the latter appeared at the Senate inquiry into former military comptroller Carlos Garcia's plea bargain with prosecutors.

Reyes, whose former budget officer

ENRILE

TRILLANES

George Rabusa accused him of having allegedly pawned off military panels, died last week in an apparent suicide.

At the Jan. 27 televised hearing, Trillanes trashed Reyes, chastised him a few times and would not allow him to question other resource persons.

PMA Supt. Sher Aden Leonardo Calderon has scolded Trillanes' behavior as "unbecoming."

Enrile said the PMA could pass judgment on Trillanes' behavior but this would not affect his standing in the Senate.

"That controversy of his power was rendered in the context of their military discipline," he said.

"They can no longer discipline him. I don't know whether they have the power to expel him from the rolls of the graduates of the Philippine Military Academy, but they can express their opinion of him," he said.

Enrile said Trillanes was just learning the ropes and should be forgiven for his behavior.

"I would for more understanding perhaps as a fellow senator given the fact that he's new in the Senate. He has not been really grounded on the rules," he said.

He also noted that Trillanes was one of the key leaders of the July 2003 failed coup, also known as the Oakwood mutiny, which he said was promoting military corruption.

Enrile, Honasan want Libingan burial for Marcos

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO SENATORS instrumental in the downfall of ferdinand Marcos during the 1986 Edsa Revolution now want the late dictator buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said Marcos, his former boss, deserved the distinction owing to his achievements as a World War II veteran, legislator and later president of the country.

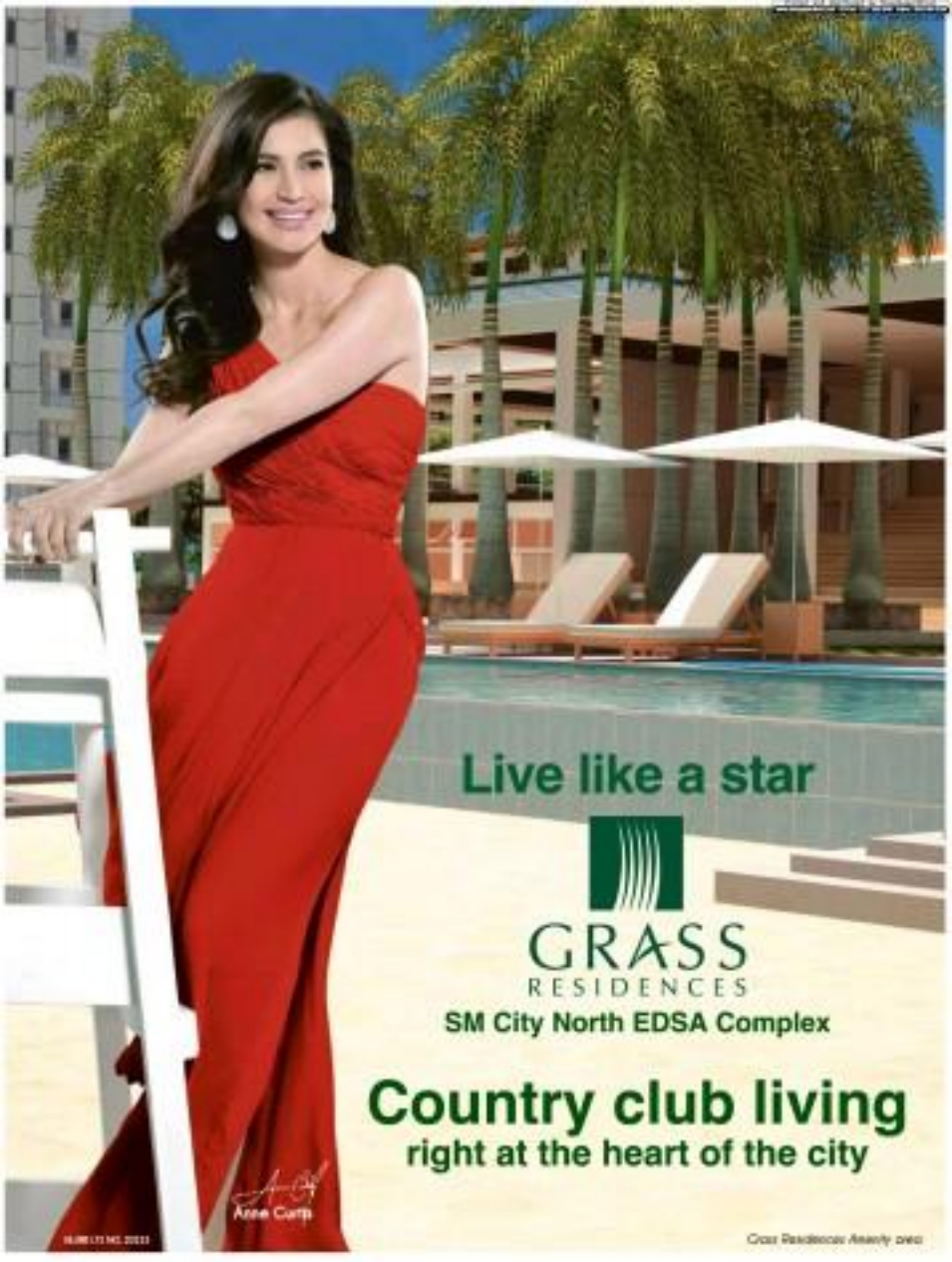
In 1986, then Defense Secretary Enrile withdrew his support for the Marcos administration, triggering a bloodless uprising that ended 14 years of one-man rule.

"I think in terms of his entitlement to become a resident of the Libingan ng mga Bayani, (it) should not be questioned," he told reporters.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan, one of the young colonels who led the revolt against Marcos, also endorsed the proposal to finally accord Marcos the honor of being buried in the cemetery reserved for the likes of soldiers of high distinction and national artists.

"I think it's about time we bury this culture of anger, hatred, vindictiveness, and recrimination," he told the reporters. "It will not diminish our selfish right as a people if we collectively decide to moderate that act of clairvoyant policy."

Asked if burying Marcos at the Libingan might be seen as an insult to victims of atrocities during martial law, he said: "Without mentioning names, many people buried in the Libingan were questioned also."



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Palace, Senate, House welcome SC ruling

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Christian V. Esguerra

MEANWHILE all the two chambers of Congress yesterday welcomed the Supreme Court ruling allowing impeachment proceedings against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

Iloilo Rep. Neil Tupas, chair of the House committee on justice which will hear the impeachment complaints, said the panel opposes the tribunal's decision to uphold the sovereign power of the people to impeach an official.

"The ruling clarifies a lot of questions on the one-year bar rule vis-à-vis the public accountability of impeachable officials," he said.

Tupas said the committee on justice will hear the impeachment complaints filed against Gutierrez.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the ruling came at a time of growing perception that the Supreme Court was taking up the cudgels for former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, whose administration has cases that have been gathering dust in the Office of the Ombudsman.

Less than stellar

"We also welcome the decision as we believe that impeachment is a matter that falls exclusively within the jurisdiction of Congress, and that the Supreme Court should never have intervened in the first place," Pangilinan said. "That [it] resolved to mistake is a welcome development."

In Malacañang, President Aquino's spokesperson Edwin Lacierda told reporters: "We welcome the development."

"But we leave it to the House to proceed with its decision to continue its impeachment proceedings against the Ombudsman," he said.

In a statement released later yesterday, Lacierda said Gutierrez had fallen short of fulfilling her mandate to address graft and corruption.

"The Ombudsman's less than stellar record in fulfilling the mandate of her office caused delay in a country-seeking progress in the fight for accountability and against corruption," Lacierda said. "This has incurred the House to seek accountability in turn from the Ombudsman. All citizens for good, transparent, accountable government are only welcome the Supreme Court's removal of an obstacle to pursuing justice and honesty in public service," he said.

Ball back with Congress

Gutierrez is facing two impeachment complaints in the House justice committee for alleged betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution. But the hearings had been suspended because of a status quo ante order issued by the Supreme Court.

Aurora Rep. Edgardo "Sonny" Angara said that with the high court's ruling, the ball was now back with Congress.

"Clearly, a prolongation of the status quo ante order can no longer be justified because it would have deprived Congress of its duty and prerogative under the Constitution," Angara said.

Pangilinan said "the failure of the Ombudsman to act swiftly on corruption cases have emboldened many to continue with their corrupt ways."

"The last thing we want is a Supreme Court that is perceived to be a stumbling block to the efforts to address prevalent corruption in our country," he said.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said the complainants would now be free to present evidence and Gutierrez to give her side so that the members of the House justice committee would be guided on its action.

"We've been awaiting this resolution as this committee expects the authority of the Supreme Court to decide whether the impeachment cases against us are not. But now, we have, and the committee will now proceed," Rodriguez said.

Integrity in doubt

Albayan Rep. Edcel Lagman said that "now that Gutierrez can no longer delay or quash the impeachment proceedings against her, the House justice committee should act with haste and apply the rule of law unreservedly."

Deputy Speaker Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada said the charges against Gutierrez were serious.

"Finally, we can continue our quest for truth. This was what the proceedings were all about, in the first place, getting at the truth. It is easy to forget what started this all, which is the question of the Ombudsman's fitness to continue in office," he said.

Tañada said Gutierrez would now have the chance to address the allegations against her instead of "giving us the runaround by using legal technicalities."

He added: "We have an Ombudsman whose integrity is in doubt. Obviously, we cannot have that. Her position is no longer with public interest that she must not only be above question but also beyond reproach."

Supre. Minor Rep. Teodoro Casiño said that while he had not yet read the high court's decision, "it is good that Congress can now fulfill its mandate of holding the Ombudsman accountable for betrayal of public trust and other impeachable offenses."

Casiño said he hoped that in the course of the impeachment proceedings, "we be allowed to conduct the controversial plea bargain between the Office of the Ombudsman and ex-military comptroller Carlos Garcia, who is accused of the multibillion scheme of plunder.

Mr. Aquino had earlier expressed disappointment with the plea bargain that allowed Garcia to walk free on bail of P40,000.

Possible appeal

House Senior Rep. Rodolfo Farinas said that while the high court's decision was unanimous, the House would be unlikely to proceed with the impeachment case should Gutierrez seek the tribunal's reconsideration.

According to Farinas, vice chair of the House committee on justice, since Gutierrez files her appeal, it will be pointless to proceed because she will likely seek the impeachment hearings until the high court rules with finality.

Farinas challenged the Ombudsman to yield to the impeachment process to prove that she was innocent of the charges.

He said the House could hold marathon hearings even during the summer break just to wrap up the impeachment case.

While the four impeachment complaints remained in limbo, Tupas was already preparing for the filing of a second impeachment complaint by January.

Tupas said this was part of the discussions in the drafting of the committee report on the recent House inquiry into the Garcia plea bargain.

Baseless plea bargain

"We have a conviction that Ombudsman Gutierrez should face another impeachment complaint for approving a baseless plea bargain," Tupas said.

He said the new complaint could be made by August, when the pending ban on the filing of impeachment cases against the Ombudsman had expired.

Tupas said the House justice committee was likely to propose the firing of a third Special Prosecutor Wendell Sulit for being responsible for the plea bargain.

"The President has the power and authority to sack Prosecutor Sulit, but a hearing at the Office of the President should be done as a matter of due process. We agreed that Sulit be suspend public trust for pushing the plea bargain," Tupas said.

'Very, very tough'

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile declined to comment on the high court's ruling, pointing out the possibility that he would preside over an impeachment court.

But Franklin Drilon also declined to comment at length.

"I'm glad that the Supreme Court allowed ... the constitutional process to proceed. But we should not prejudge the Ombudsman's case," he said.

"Let the process proceed. Let the House decide on whether or not there are sufficient grounds for impeachment. Beyond that I cannot say anything because [the case] might come to us."

But Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago told reporters that courts—the goal of an impeachment case—would not come easy.

Santiago said a fourth of the entire House needed to vote in favor of the complaint to formally impeach Gutierrez. In the Senate, a two-thirds vote would be required to convict her.

"Such a very, very tough procedure," Santiago said. "If we cannot muster those votes, sometimes, [an impeachment] is just a waste of the country's resources that could otherwise be spent on economic and public-services." With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora

SC rules for impeachment of Gutierrez to proceed

From page A1

tion..." the statement partly read.

No violation

In junking Gutierrez's petition, the high court upheld the argument of the lawmakers and Solicitor General Jose Anselmo Cadiz that the referral of the impeachment complaints did not violate the Ombudsman's right to due process.

"The majority has decided that there is no denial of due process since the respondent can file an answer after the complaint has been declared sufficient in form and substance," Marquez said.

In her petition, Gutierrez claimed that the House justice committee's decision to dismiss "outrightly" the two impeachment complaints filed separately by leftist and civil society groups violated a constitutional provision banning the filing of more than one impeachment case against a public official within a year.

Former Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros, friend rebel officer Brenda Lim and the parents of the late Tarlac Phillip Pimentel filed the first complaint against Gutierrez on July 22, 2010.

They accused her of betraying public trust and violating the Constitution for the "flawed and unconstitutionally low" performance of her office in committing roving government officials, and her purported failure to correct by deeds or omission cases filed in connection with the Arroyo administration's controversial deal with China's ZTE Corp. on a national broadband network.

On Aug. 3, 2010, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. also filed a complaint against Gutierrez over her failure to go after those behind the P728-million fertilizer fund scam.

In 2009, another group composed of former Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and 58 others filed an impeachment case against Gutierrez for culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust. This was quickly dismissed.

No infringement

Marquez said that in its review, the high court found that the House justice committee did not infringe on the Constitution because the two complaints against Gutierrez were "referred to (it) at the same time."

Jose Marquez: "The majority said that ... in this particular case, the two complaints were referred to the justice committee at the same time and the committee ... already knew that were two complaints referred to it, was only doing one [impeachment] proceeding."

But the dissenting justices said the justice committee failed to observe the guideline that for any impeachment complaint to be given due course, it must be filed by a member of the House and it must be endorsed by at least one-third of all the members of the House.

"Since there are no duly published rules, this violates the due process," Marquez said in summarizing the dissenters' ruling.

Solicitor General Cadiz, who represented the House in the oral arguments before the high court, was pleased with the majority ruling.

"We really should give credit to the Supreme Court for this act," Cadiz said on the phone. "We salute and thank the Supreme Court for upholding the separation of powers of the co-equal branches of government."

How they voted

Apart from Morales, those who voted against Gutierrez's petition were Associate Justice Diosdado Peralta, Presidential Appointee Jose Mendoza, Associate Justice Arturo Brion, Chief Justice Renato Corona, Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, and Associate Justices Antonio Eduardo Nachura, Martin Villarama, Jose Abad Santos and Roberto Abad.

Those who dissented were Chief Justice Ruben Reyes and Associate Justices Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Arturo Brion, Diosdado Peralta and Lucas Bersamin.

Associate Justices Jose Perez and Mariano del Castillo partially concurred with the majority. Associate Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr. inhibited because his son, Mario Roger Velasco Jr., is a member of the House justice committee.

Marquez said Perez and Del Castillo "believe that while the second impeachment complaint might be banned, there is nothing to stop the filing of the first complaint from proceeding."

He said the impeachment complaint against Gutierrez was different from those filed against then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo because the complaints against Arroyo were forwarded to the justice committee "en separate occasions."

"These facts situate substantially differ from the facts at the present case," he said, adding that the controversy over the dismissal of the impeachment complaints against Arroyo did not reach the high court.

Marquez said the reasons that the tribunal, although composed of Arroyo appointees but for one, "is not an Arroyo court."

"Said pet were the decisions and acts will see that these are well thought of, taking into consideration all the facts and provisions of applicable laws," he said.

Marquez also said the high court's latest ruling was not intended to avoid harsh criticism similar to that which met "unpopular decisions" such as the acquittal of Hubert Webb and six others previously convicted of the Vizconde massacre.

"The court is deciding based on its perception and appreciation of the facts and applicable provisions of the Constitution," he said.

Welcome news

As Gutierrez studies her options, the complainants welcomed the tribunal's ruling.

"This is extremely welcome news at this time when people are searching for truth and justice," Bayan's Reyes said.

"We hope this impeachment case to proceed, especially now that there are allegations of grave corruption and that the Office of the Ombudsman has failed to uphold its mandate of going after corrupt officials, as shown by the plea bargain [with plunder suspect Carlos Garcia]," he said.

Reyes also said the impeachment case would also "test the credibility and accountability of government institutions under the Aquino government."

Bagkahagad People's Movement by Change, another complainant, said the high court's ruling would help ensure that the move to oust Gutierrez would not be politicized.

"The decision by the high court has put additional attention to the ongoing legislative probes on the Garcia plea bargain that have exposed more anomalies involving the Ombudsman. We hope that the long delayed impeachment process will reach its logical and just conclusion," Pagkahagad's cochair Mary Ann Manahan's and its counterpart. With a report from Leila B. Salaverria

Mancao asks appeals court to listen to him

By Nikko Dizon

FORMER POLICE official Cezar Mancao II has asked the Court of Appeals (CA) to allow him to intervene in the case against fugitive Gen. Jovito Lacson, pointing out that it was his affidavits that the magistrates had cited as unreliable when they dismissed the murder charges against Lacson.

Through his lawyer, Ferdinand Topacio, Mancao filed a motion for leave to intervene, attached with a motion asking the appellate court to reconsider its dismissal of the charges against Lacson.

"We are telling the CA that if you still judge us, then nobody in in the case and listen to our explanation. We are saying that the judgment was not right," said Topacio in Filipino.

Topacio said Lacson "should not have been allowed any relief from the courts" since the senator had not even submitted himself to the jurisdiction of the court," referring to Lacson's refusal to surrender despite a warrant being issued for his arrest.

He said the appellate court's 4th Division had relied on Lacson's petition on the merits of Mancao's affidavits without a full-blown trial.

He said the decision was "highly irregular" since judging the credibility of a witness was within the jurisdiction only of a trial court.

Topacio said that Mancao had been able to explain the discrepancies in his two sworn statements before the Ilocos Regional Trial Court during a hearing to determine his qualifications as a state witness.

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Time to give up armed struggle, AFP tells Joma

UTRECHT—Without time Jose Ma. Sison, founder of the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines, abandons the armed struggle as a way of changing society, the head of the Armed Forces of the Philippines said yesterday.

"Sison (Maoist's statesman) should now shift the mode of his struggle," AFP Chief of Staff Ricardo David said in an interview during the 29th founding anniversary of the military's Southern Luzon Command at Camp Seluc yesterday.

David said the military had already shifted from its "search-and-destroy" strategy to its "internal Peace and Security Plan dubbed the 'Oplan Bayanihan' campaign.

"Enough of this 42 years of communist armed struggle. If (the) communist ideology is the solution to the problems besetting the country, to fix it. But not through armed struggle," he said.

Sison went into exile in Utrecht, The Netherlands, after he was granted amnesty by then President Corazon Aquino in 1986.

Asked to comment on criticism by leftist activists that the new Bayanihan anti-insurgency plan was similar to the old and much-criticized Oplan Bantay Laya, David replied critics "to minimize with government soldiers on the ground and not for themselves the enormity of the intention of the military."

"We have nothing to hide," he said.

Human rights activists had accused the previous administration of encouraging summary executions and disappearances as part of its anti-insurgency campaign.

Corrections

IN THE FEB. 10 ISSUE, Rigoberto Tiglao's "Unthink" column on Page A13 of the Opinion section—"Our dreams will never die!"—misspelled the first name of Antonio Luna (assassinated on Aselle chain. His name is Emilio—not Gilberto—Carigao.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A20 of the Metro section misstated the number of children killed in a house at San Antonio Village in Pamplona City. Of the four people killed, three—not four—were children.

* * *

IN THE FEB. 13 ISSUE, the headline of an Agence Fre Presse story on Page A17 misstated the number of people arrested in drug raids in Capetown de Oro. A cop and 18—not 70—people were arrested in the raids.

* * *

IN THE FEB. 12 ISSUE, Ramon Tulfo's "the Target" column on Page A26 of the Metro section—"Senate hearing a courtesy hall"—misstated that Former Sen. Sonny Alcantara Jr. of the Nacionalista Party is Muslim Mindanao's representative in Congress. Zaldy is the current ARMM governor; Sonny Alcantara is the current mayor of Datu Saudi Ampatuan.

* * *

IN THE FEB. 14 ISSUE, a blind item on Page A27 of the Metro section—"Mixed reaction fire in Manila"—misstated the name of the budget motel on the corner of Ilaya and Bonifacio Streets in Intramuros, Manila, which caught fire on Feb. 13. The budget motel is Uniwide—not Rosario.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, 700 Building, Chino Roces Avenue Extension, Makati City, fax No. 897-8710, or e-mail the Publisher at publisher@inquirer.com.ph.

Complainants must first call Inquirer offices and then send the letter to the Publisher's e-mail address, publisher@inquirer.com.ph or fax No. 897-8710, or, send the Publisher the phone number to 897-4000 local 209.

WORLD'S LONGEST INSURGENCY. This Dec. 26, 2009, file photo shows New People's Army rebels in formation during the Communist Party of the Philippines' 41st founding anniversary celebration in the hinterlands of Barlipa del San Vicente, Philippines' government and communist rebels meet in Norway for their first peace talks in six years on Feb. 15. Amid continuing fighting, however, observers have played down expectations. AFP

Fall of top Red clouds 'strategy of the brave'

From page A1

"We are looking forward to the negotiations and expect positive results," chief rebel negotiator Luis Jalandoni said on Monday on his arrival in the snow-covered Norwegian capital for the talks brokered by Norway.

But upon landing at Gardermoen airport, Jalandoni is detained on Tuesday evening after arrest was set "on image by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to disrupt the peace negotiations."

Jalandoni said Antonino had to be freed as he was a consultant of the National Democratic Front (NDF), the rebels' political arm engaged in the peace talks, and covered by an immunity agreement.

Jorvinico, a member of the police-making Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) was arrested in a raid in Baliuag, Bulacan, before nightfall on Monday hours before the start of a seven-day ceasefire between the government and the New People's Army (NPA).

"It is imperative that Jasmines be released immediately and unconditionally so that there will be no disruption of the formal peace talks," Jalandoni said.

Gen. Ricardo David Jr., AFP chief of staff said Jasmines was served warrants for murder and rebellion and must stand trial.

David said in a statement that the arrest of Jasmines "will definitely affect the organizing, deployment and propaganda capability of the (CPP) against the Filipino people."

"Enemies of this kind will continue as we move on to achieve the country's goal of reducing the enemies of the country's criminal," he said.

A Philippine National Police spokesman said Jasmines faced 13 murder charges.

Talks do not suspend law

Lt. Gen. Jaime Delos Reyes, chief of the Northern Luzon Command, said he did not think the arrest of Jasmines would upset the talks in Norway.

"Peace talks do not, in any form, suspend any law," he said.

Pangilinan said that Jasmines failed to show that he was covered by the immunity guarantees by communist negotiators.

Senior Supt. Wendy Rosario, acting Bulacan police director, said Jasmines was arrested a few days after he arrived in his house at Barangay Sulib in Baliuag. Rosario said informants told police about the presence of Jasmines in the village.

He said Jasmines was arrested under a criminal complaint. Relatives talked to Jasmines and checked his physical condition at Camp Gen. Alejo Santos before he was whisked away to Camp Crame yesterday afternoon, said his sister-in-law, Percy Jasmines. "They did not know him," she said.

Rosario said the arrest warrant against Jasmines stemmed from the complaints of families of soldiers killed in ambushes in Quezon in 1989.

'A silly excuse'

The rebels feared Jasmines, as a linguist, was escorted by two Army trucks, was brought at 5 p.m. yesterday to the PNP Criminal Center in Camp Crame. A handful of protesters led by the leftist human rights group Karapatan gathered outside the gate.

"The trumped-up charges of murder filed in Quezon are a silly excuse to keep him in detention," said a Karapatan spokesman. "The criminal charges filed against political leaders and members of progressive organizations are completely falsified and baseless."

The government and the Moslem-led MILF have been to keep-alive negotiations for nearly 25 years to end one of the world's longest-running communist insurgencies that has killed 40,000 people.

The 4,000-strong NPA has been blamed for murder and extortion on mines, farms, construction and other businesses, including mobile phone companies, scaring away potential investors in rural areas.

Gov't, panel upbeat

Last week, government negotiators said they were optimistic talks would produce results in 18 months and one "peace achievable in three years if leaders and rebels demonstrate sincerity in finally ending senseless violence."

Analysts do not share that optimism, saying there are many serious obstacles to peace talks, although the negotiations could reduce violence, particularly human rights abuses.

"Neither side will win militarily," risk consultancy International Crisis Group (ICG) said on Monday. "It is far better to negotiate than to wage an unwinnable war or wait for the organization to disintegrate over time, with the risk that NPA fighters will simply swell the ranks of the many hired guns."

"Despite what many considers an unsentimental ideology, the insurgency has endured," the Brussels based ICG said. "Many of its criticisms of economic inequality, human rights abuses and broader social injustice still resonate with some Filipinos."

The ICG report said government forces killed 35 rebels last year and captured 131 others, while more than 138 surrendered.

NPA stronger last year

Still, the communist rebels grew stronger last year after a long period of battle losses, acquiring more fighters and guns and killing more government forces in a spike of attacks, the Philippine government report said ahead of renewed peace talks.

The confidential government threat assessment report, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, said the communist insurgency recovered last year from a decline dealt by battle losses since 2002 with its fighters increasing by 38 to 4,398 and firearms rising by more than 1,000 to just a year to 4,817.

The rebels managed to consolidate its rural strongholds that had been overrun by the military and staged 413 attacks...11 percent more than in 2009. Security personnel killed by the rebels rose by nearly 9 percent to 152, including 102 soldiers, due to improved guerrilla capability to make bombs used in ambushes, according to the report. With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan in Manila, Rosette Orgas and Gamaliel Reyes-Delgado in Quezon Central Louise Delfin Mallari, Inquirer Southern Luzon; and AFP, AP and Reuters

ARRESTED TALKS. Philippine government representative Alexander Padilla (left) and Luis Jalandoni of the communist-led Moslem Democratic Front exchange documents at the start of peace talks in Asker, some 20 km south of Oslo on Tuesday. The Philippine government and communist rebels resumed peace talks more than six years after the last round broke down, but prospects for progress remain uncertain after the arrest on Monday of a top guerrilla leader Jasmines. AFP

FACTBOX

- The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) was organized by university professor Jose Maria Sison in late 1968 to overthrow the government and set up a communist state anchored on Marxist-Leninist and Mao Zedong's ideologies. Soon after, the New People's Army (NPA) was organized.
- Peace talks between the government and Moslem rebels first started in early 1986 after Corazon Aquino was swept into power by a popular uprising that toppled the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. A ceasefire agreement was also reached.
- The ceasefire and peace negotiations ended in January 1987 when security forces opened fire on a large group of farmers marching outside Malacañang to demand land reform and to allow landless peasants to own farmlands.
- Fidel Ramos, a retired general and former defense secretary, reopened peace negotiations with the Moslem rebels after he was elected President in 1992. A final was signed in The Hague establishing a four-phase process to discuss a formal agenda on human rights, social and economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms and disposition of forces.

VFA a turnoff

- In 1998, the two sides signed an agreement to respect human rights and international humanitarian law, the only major achievement in peace negotiations. A year later, the rebels seized their bids on negotiations after relations allied with President Joseph Estrada vowed to crush the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States, allowing American soldiers to hold exercises and train with Filipino troops in the country.
- The rebels resumed peace talks when Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo came to power in 2001, after Estrada was forced to step down over allegations of corruption. Leftist groups supported anti-Estrada protests and Arroyo returned the favor by helping them win seats in the House of Representatives in the May 2001 elections for the first time.
- Meetings in February, April and June 2004, hosted by Norway, led to the setting up of a Joint Monitoring Committee.
- In August 2004, the rebels postponed formal talks after the United States and some European states placed them and the NPA on a terrorist blacklist.

Talks off again

- There were informal talks over the next five years, but in February 2005 the rebels officially abandoned talks after 43 health workers were arrested in a raid as a crackdown in Kidal province and accused of belonging to the NPA.
- After taking office in June last year, President Aquino promised to work to end the country's two insurgencies: talks with Moro separatists restarted last week. He ordered more pressure to bear on rebels against the 43 health workers. In an informal meeting in Hong Kong in December last year, the two sides agreed to resume formal talks in early 2011 and impose a Christmas ceasefire. Reuters

Comelec's 1st: Exec charged with electoral sabotage

From page A1

Miguel Zubiri in a tight race, had accused Bañas of rigging the 2007 midterm polls.

Padded in favor of GMA bets

With the filing of the case in court, "this will go through a process of a formal trial," Ricardo Bonoan, chairman of the prosecutors' election lawyers of the then Genuine Opposition in the 2007 balloting.

In the indictments, the Comelec said that Bañas substituted tampered and falsified copies of the provincial certificate of canvass of votes from the cities of General Santos and Koronadal, and the towns of Polomolok, Tantangkan, Tupi, Banga, Lake Sebu, Norala, Sto. Niño, Surallah, Tampakan and T'boli.

Bañas sent the documents to the National Board of Canvassers at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City on May 24, 2007, which rejected padded votes ranging from 42,000 to 170,000 in favor of senatorial candidates mostly belonging to the then administration's Team Unity.

The Team Unity candidates after were Defensor in later boosted from the ranks of the top seven Pimentel, Pilapil with a reported 119,000 votes; Michael Defensor, 119,000; Tessie Aquino-Oreta, 116,000; Joker Arroyo, 116,000; Ralph Recto, 116,000; Edgardo Angara, 116,000; Vicente Sotto III, 97,000; Zubiri, 77,000; and Vicente Magsaysay, 62,000.

Aamil

The documents also showed that 14,971 votes were shaved from Team Unity candidate Luis "Chavit" Singson, while votes for Sen. Loren Legarda, a Genuine Opposition candidate, were padded by 42,000, according to the Comelec.

Under the law, the modification of the correct results in a single document or transposition of garnered votes from one election document to another involving more than 5,000 votes, and all other forms of manipulation involving 10,000 votes are also considered electoral sabotage.

Bañas has told reporters that Bañas's votes are otherwise "without leave a "long time ago."

"I understand that the judge will have to review the information first before he issues a formal warrant of arrest against Bañas. Once the warrant is issued, I guess, the search for her will begin," the Comelec chief said.

The charges against Bañas stemmed from a previous Comelec ruling stating that the election officer had failed to convince the election body to entertain a previous decision finding probable cause against her.

PIMENTEL

ZUBIRI

BAÑAS TE

Palace to study Taiwan proposal for legal assistance pact

MALACAÑANG said yesterday it will look into the proposal of Taiwan for a mutual legal assistance arrangement with the Philippines following Manila's deportation of a group of Taiwanese nationals to mainland China for credit card fraud charges there.

But Presidential Spokesperson Ma. Victoria Lacierda said the Taiwanese proposal will be "considered within the framework of existing policies," apparently referring to the Philippines' one-China policy.

"This is also in line with the policy that we do not intend to be a haven for international crime syndicates," he said.

Asked how Manila and Taipei could come up with an arrangement that would require them to cooperate with each other in cases where their nationals are concerned when the two have no diplomatic ties, Lacierda said: "That's why we are going to consider if that only within the framework of existing policies right now."

He said that the Palace will discuss this matter with the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Manila Economic Cooperation Office.

Asked about the sort of bailout package issued by the Court of Appeals on the arrest of Taiwanese nationals who have since been deported to China, Lacierda said that acting Immigration Commissioner Roy Ledesma will file his explanation to the SA on the bureau's actions to dispute these accusations. Christina O. Avendaño

CLASSIFIEDS

PMA: An image gone from posh to pot

By Guillermo R. Luntayao
Contributor

Editor's Note: The writer is a former member of the House of Representatives and former governor of Baguio.)

"SOMETHING, in a parable mood," as the central character in the Hawthorne novelette, "The Ring and I" would put it.

I am talking about why graduate and other high-ranking officers of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), have developed the propensity to tarnish and blacken the image and sacred traditions built in and around it.

Time was when one talked of honor and discipline what came to mind was the PMA. One could not imagine the institution will profess anything but men committed to a code of conduct guided honesty, integrity, probity and obedience to duty.

Banned straight when he walked, respectful and humble when he talked, a PMAyer ought to be the object of envy by young boys out of adulation for young girls.

What they produced [and] the PMA and business affairs in the AFP they were held in high esteem, awarded respect and deference in social and business gatherings.

COMMENTARY

Corrosion of image

This beautiful image of the PMA and its products is no more. I shake my head in sad, wan and regret when events of the past several years, which saw the conversion of the noble image of the PMA and PMAyers, flash in my mind.

I do not know when the conversion of the PMA image began. I recall, however, that in the 9th Congress of which I was a member, but the negative aspects of PMA events beginning to be perceived.

It was an era of coup attempts, destabilization and deficiencies to-date unmatched and horrify. The disturbing fact was the protesters of all the commotions were PMAyers!

Threat to freedom

A good number of us in the 9th Congress were dismayed, distressed and disgusted that the young men reticent the tax, peace and order and security of the country were to become the people's protectors and defenders had become threats to their freedom and peaceful life.

One vivacious was such. A proposal to abolish the PMA existing and to Congress as the academy began to be perceived not as a training site for officers and gentlemen but as breeding ground for coup plotters and destabilizers. The proposal was nipped in the bud by the then Speaker Ramon Mitra Jr. in the name of constitutionality and in deference to his PMA cadet son.

Hotly boozing

Fast forward to contemporary times. The PMA is getting hotly boozings these days, and I cannot help but wonder what pains in the PMA image are still in their proper place or if they can be located at all. That's how tattered PMAs image has become, to thanks to PMAyer generals who are trying their darnedest best to stay mum and restore on their alma mater.

It is not fair to generalize and say PMAyer generals have caused and are causing the disintegration of nobility and honor in the PMA. To be sure there were and are PMAyer generals who did and do honor to their alma mater. That's expected of them. They are the builders. But let's look at the termites.

Congressional probe

The revelations tumbling out of the congressional investigations of corruption in the military are so sordid that they are enough to make decent citizens puke.

Generals, it is being revealed, dip their hands into the coffers they have no business touching. They pocket the money involved for the upkeep of the soldiers and the amount they steal is not peanuts. The head of the generals is to the millions.

The shenanigans of the generals range from actions to initiations, with resorting intelligence public funds as their common denominator.

The wife of one general struck so often as her first job. Her talent surpass business like airline, shopping money, clothing allowances, etc.) all provided by the AFP.

Flats in Manhattan

Their children live in tony flats in Manhattan. One of them allegedly has his JD ("he's not garbed in designer outfits from head to toe. And the parents dutifully buy him the expensive outfits—with money-probably obtained.

The wife is guarded by a security detail—from the Army of course. The family is not treated by doctors who reportedly draw their pay from AFP. There's an increasing detail of the lifestyle of this general's family which any wife cannot help chuckling over.

Cook, pianist

They have an Army cook pinked by the general's mistress because aside from whipping up mouth-watering dishes he also plays the piano when the mistress has a food fest.

Another general is discovered to have assets that are out of this world. Or anyway out of the range of his being pay. But he is extremely challenged. He could not recall any of the foreign trips made by his wife and who traveled 47 times mostly to the United States.

He could not recall either that his wife acquired assets, eight elegant houses in so on, so...for the family in the "land of the free and home of the brave." Wife's alias? Wife funds kicked from the AFP, of course.

Why am I detailing the financial highs [sic] of the generals which by no means is thorough and complete? It is because I want to demonstrate the degradation to which the prestige and honor of the PMA has sunk as a consequence of the unrivaled behavior of the bad eggs the academy has produced who latest become top dogs in the AFP.

Cadet-nominees

My heart bleeds when the incumbents of the unrolled generals inflicted collateral damage on the PMA. As a young boy I entertained dreams of one day becoming a PMA cadet. As a senior high school student, I was a cadet-nominee representing the Province of Ilocos. I passed the exams but failed in the physical and medical exams. It's a noble institution endowed on the ideals of honor, valor, integrity and patriotism.

What happened between the years when the academy was created with great and regard, and today when it is perceived as a producer of adventurous and of big-time crooks? Sad.

Mistah system

Some observers are pointing to the "mistah" (classmate) system of tradition as the root cause of all the grievous behavior of the top echelons in the military. The system gives [classmates] senior officers in command positions. Nepotism is the fashion example of which is conversion of the soldiers' pays into stand-by funds for the crooked military higher-ups.

It behooves us to repair the damage on the PMA and restore it to its former glory. We have to purge, clean left mouth preserving and refining. The PMA is one of them.

Trip to jail

I earnestly hope that the current president of corruption in the country will be built not only to the trip to jail for the damning patriotic but also to legislators that would give a fresh shot to the arms of the PMA.

No sense silencing the PMA image to go from posh to pot.

COMMITTED TO CODE OF CONDUCT Members of Philippine Military Class 2004 parade at Fort del Pilar in Baguio City. Banned wrongdoings when they with, the PMA cadets are the object of envy by young boys and of adulation by young girls.

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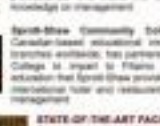
LOBBY

KITCHEN

Solon invokes thieves' honor

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Cadet-nominees

My heart bleeds when the incumbents of the unrolled generals inflicted collateral damage on the PMA. As a young boy I entertained dreams of one day becoming a PMA cadet. As a senior high school student, I was a cadet-nominee representing the Province of Ilocos. I passed the exams but failed in the physical and medical exams. It's a noble institution endowed on the ideals of honor, valor, integrity and patriotism.

What happened between the years when the academy was created with great and regard, and today when it is perceived as a producer of adventurous and of big-time crooks? Sad.

Mistah system

Some observers are pointing to the "mistah" (classmate) system of tradition as the root cause of all the grievous behavior of the top echelons in the military. The system gives [classmates] senior officers in command positions. Nepotism is the fashion example of which is conversion of the soldiers' pays into stand-by funds for the crooked military higher-ups.

It behooves us to repair the damage on the PMA and restore it to its former glory. We have to purge, clean left mouth preserving and refining. The PMA is one of them.

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Power war

Caloocan 4th Dist Rep. Mary Edith Grace Cagas questioned the nature of having an ethics committee if it would allow members to attack each other without restraint.

Magsaysay questioned why the majority voted to increase of jurisdiction only after the committee had already had its fourth hearing of the case.

"Is this a power war between the ruling and minority parties? Do we want our fellow lawmakers to behave each other? We can raise our opinion but we should say it in a decorous manner," Magsaysay said.

Bohol Rep. Erin Aumentado, vice-chairman of the ethics committee, admitted the hearing after two hours to give each camp a week to review their positions before voting on whether the committee had jurisdiction over Belby's case.

The hearing was adjourned without taking up the second point on its agenda—the application of Ibnto's counsel Atty. Romulo Macalintal, who is having drug charges in Hong Kong

Dominguez hearing in QC today

...GAN (Sofi gang leader Roger Dominguez is expected to attend a hearing today at the Quezon City prosecutor's office for the preliminary investigation of the murder of car dealer Vernon Evangelista.

Dominguez, 33, and his companion, Jason Miranda, ordered suspected gunmen to kill Evangelista last week after they were involved in a traffic violation in Quezon City.

Roger and his younger brother, Raymond, are alleged to have masterminded Evangelista's abduction and murder last month.

Raymond, who was arrested earlier, has been charged in court with car theft with homicide.

Waiver

Roger has reportedly filed a waiver opposing for a preliminary investigation. This means the charges against Roger and Miranda will have to go through the scrutiny of an investigating prosecutor but before being filed in court.

Roger also faces charges of simple disobedience and violation of the Land Transportation Code, both bailable offenses.

Miranda was not included in the charges, records showed.

The Dominguez brothers were implicated in the Evangelista incident by the confessions extracted by their alleged cohorts Alfred Alindada and Ferdinand Bandara, who are also facing charges in another branch of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

—Julie M. Aurelio

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INQUIRER

OPINION

A P179-B slush fund?

CARLOS GARCIA stands accused of amassing P303 million in ill-gotten wealth when he was the comptroller of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. His budget officer, retired Lt. Col. George Rabusa, is also facing charges of siphoning off P50 million from the military budget. Rabusa, in turn, has told lawmakers that he had prepared going-away presents (pabaon) for three former AFP chiefs of staff—Generals Angelo Reyes, Hermogenes Villanueva and Roy Cimatu—in amounts ranging from P50 million to P80 million, aside from providing a monthly "allowance" of P5 million to Reyes.

EDITORIAL

So where did all that money come from? The Office of the Ombudsman, which has given up trying to pin down Garcia for plunder, says it has no idea. Anti-graft prosecutors claimed their investigators searched for suppliers that might have paid him off, but could not find a single one who was willing to cooperate.

It seems now that they were looking for evidence to support the plunder charge in the wrong places. Former state auditor Heidi Mendoza pointed at several possible sources of military officials' ill-gotten wealth. To mention just two, there was the double charging of expenses, like the P128-million repair of a C-130 aircraft, to the United Nations funds intended for the upkeep of Philippine troops taking part in UN peacekeeping missions, and then there was the purchase of P1.6 billion worth of office supplies using funds from the AFP Modernization Program.

Rabusa identified another source: the "conversion" of various allocations in the AFP budget, especially those intended for payment of salaries of soldiers, to other purposes. But how can huge sums be diverted from this fund without inviting a mutiny? Easy: just bloat the budget for personnel services.

To be fair, this practice of raising the troop ceiling and correspondingly the allocation for salaries was run riot-ously by the Arroyo administration. This has been a long-time practice intended to give the military some flexibility in meeting contingencies. The problem is that the ceiling is much too high, usually 20 percent higher than the actual troop strength. And Congress has been enabling the situation even worse by approving increases in the allocations for personnel services purportedly to cover adjustments in pensions, gratuities and other retirement benefits for military personnel, according to Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares. During the last eight years, while the positions in the AFP numbered 134,449 in 2002 and peaked at 142,368 in 2005, and even as the AFP sought annual allocations for personal services ranging from P17.4 billion (in 2009) to P24.2 billion (in 2012), the allocations actually approved by Congress for the purpose ranged from P12.3 billion (in 2003) to P16.9 billion (in 2012). Colmenares calculated a "discrepancy" of P179.4 billion between the allocations requested by the AFP and the amounts approved by Congress.

That was P179.4 billion—possibly more, if some provisions remained unfilled—that the leadership of the poorly equipped and badly provisioned Armed Forces could spend at their discretion. How it was actually spent should be the subject of another congressional investigation. If this is the source of the slush fund for the military top brass, as Rabusa said, then the ongoing congressional investigation may have barely scratched the surface in terms of the personalities involved and the amounts they have squirreled away.

And what about the Philippine National Police and some departments which are given a lot of room to expand their staff? Shouldn't Congress look also into how they have used the so-called savings generated from unfilled positions?

But more than conducting investigations, Congress should stop financing corruption in government, by closely scrutinizing the budgets of government agencies, especially the military and the police. Another thing lawmakers can do is set reasonable limits for staff augmentation in those agencies. Then they should also limit the authority of government agencies to utilize savings. Too much discretion in the use of funds offers too many opportunities for corruption.

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Cheating on your wife is bad for your heart

HERE IS both bad news and good news in the same case—bad news for playboys and good news for housewives. Having more than one wife is bad for your heart. Take it from an expert on the issue—former Health Secretary Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan, a cardiologist and former professor of the Philippine Health Center, who was the resource person at the Sophian in Manila at the financial think tank Bending Philippines Inc.

"Statistics don't lie," Galvez said, "men who are faithful not only stay with their lawful wives but also have more survival benefits, who can have as many as four wives, have shorter lifespans than Christians who usually only have one."

"This is because many Muslims do not die early from natural causes but from bad performing," someone muttered.

But that is not the only reason. Failing to have only one wife but it is stressful to the heart. "Every time there are new types of stress, your heart will register," Galvez explained.

"Does the heart undergo changes when a person falls in love?" the resource cardiologist was asked.

"Yes, it does," she replied. When you see the picture of your lover, you become a different stranger. Your heart beats faster, your blood pressure rises a little bit, your pupils dilate and you feel flushed. But it gives a feeling of well-being. Then it gets into control." It is like exercise and it is similar to being under the influence of drugs, except that it is different.

On the other hand, when you have a relationship, you experience negative stress, because "you are compelled to lie every day to your partner. That's very bad for the heart." Income level sometimes is bothering you, but the economic status of some, your blood pressure is extremely high. The tends to hurt disease and ultimately to heart attacks and strokes.

But only that, the sex act—which for millennia is doubly stressful for those who actively engage in "sex-fraught sex with their wives in their homes that with their mistresses in a motel where there is the risk of getting caught."

Where a man is faithful, Galvez said, both he and his spouse enjoy a good family life. And thus, in turn, is good for the heart.

Besides being faithful, how can one live a healthy lifestyle?

Galvez's reply: "Stop smoking, drink moderately, eat wisely by avoiding fatty and salty foods, increase and avoid stress. But remember to fully avoid stress because you cannot control the things that happen to you, but you can control how you react to them. Have a positive outlook."

She continued against going on a three-day fast unless that involves hamburgers and other fatty foods. Potato chips look harmless because it is vegetable, but it is oozing with fat. It is fried in food fat, which is worse than junk fat. And hamburgers are super-loaded because of this. It is composed of the leftover beef that does not look good, that is why it is ground into hamburgers so you don't see it in its original condition.

Children and teenagers are especially at risk, Dr. Galvez said, because they eat a lot of hamburgers and other junk food like potato chips. Obesity among children is increasing in Asia. The rate is proportionate to the increase of fast food outlets that serve hamburgers and other fatty foods. Chubby children may look cute but they will have health problems when they grow older. It is alarming that more and more people are having heart attacks at a very young age.

They also drink plenty of soft drinks. Young adults also spend lots of time in coffee shops like fashionable where they guzzle gallons of coffee. It has been shown by researchers that the caffeine in cola drinks and coffee eat away at the home of those who consume too much of them. The girls, especially will have osteoporosis where they grow older.

One of Dr. Galvez's advice arose when she was health secretary was to subject to investigation by the Food and Drug Administration the numerous herbal supplements being touted by their manufacturers as good for this or that disease. Not very really what their advertisements claim. Some are "placebo" that any scientific study have made on their efficacy" Some.

Some of herbal remedies dishonest: "No therapeutic claims." But the ordinary Filipino does not understand what that means, Galvez said. And sometimes in that disclaimer, the advertisements and endorsements by celebrities claim that this or that herbal is good for many diseases.

The danger is not only that those herbals may contain toxic substances, like the tainted Chinese herbal, but that patients take them instead of taking the medicines prescribed by their doctors because the advertisements and endorsements make them believe that the herbals are better.

But are the manufacturers liable if the herbals they endorse turn out to be harmful?

"Better-endorsers certainly are because they should know better," Galvez answered. "Therein celebrities also may be, but I am not sure."

• • •

On the same day the Court of Appeals issued a TRO stopping SEA GEN from processing evidence that Willie Revillame's "Willing Willie" infringes on its copyright over "Wowowin," MTF-GEN disclosed that Justice Fausthin Diamante, the justice that penned the decision, was related to an associate of the firm representing the network in the case. This automatically disqualifies Diamante from deciding the case.

Instead of disqualifying himself, however, Diamante issued the TRO.

'Ang mga mamamayan'

TUBBO WAS a song we used to sing in the seventies sometimes. It began with a line I learned's happiness to this day which went: "Ang mga mamamayan, hindi ang mga hayop, ang mga mamayan." Translated literally, it means: The people, and not things, will decide.

It's the will of the people, and not armed might, that decides the outcome of things. Or the unfolding of history. It's a heroic, anthemic, against-all-odds proposition, particularly given that "hayop" or "things" refer to the vast and well-armed military, police, paramilitary and the even more vast and more sophisticated armed apparatus of terror (short squads, cadres, generals, corporal-chauffeurs of the-state). The idea is that the struggle will be an arduous one, full of setbacks and defeats, but it will win out in the end. The people have spoken. They and not things, will decide how the world turns.

What has happened in Egypt has reminded me of that proposition again. That was People Power all over again, a multitude massing spontaneously in the heart of Cairo and refusing to budge until tyrant and thunderbolt, mild overtures and deception, amid ambivalence and negotiation, till the one person they no longer wanted to rule them left them. The people had spoken, and they had spoken in the most unequivocal way possible: clearly, direct, by forcefully.

Hosni Mubarak was not without "things." He had the military behind him, even when the had kept the country under his thumb for three decades. He had America behind him, with which he had held away over the other Arab countries for years, being a key to "peace in the Middle East" to the US (suffice it to say he had invited Israel into, the other thing despots have behind them), the idea that they've been there for so long as anybody can remember, that "the there for so long as anybody can become.

Some of those things mattered. The people spoke, and decided that it was time to go.

The way this idea has been summed home to me is not television, thanks I was not a believer in People Power. I was a believer in People's Power, and not people would ride that myth. Films stood on the shoulders of giants, and those giants were the martyrs of the past, the people, many of them nerds, who raised a fist in that red fane, who took up arms against material fate, who made sacrifices and in material fate and died doing so. They kept the flame alive, ready to turn into a raging fire when the time came.

And it came.

But that notwithstanding, there was something awesome and unforeseen in it and of itself in what happened on February 1986, which would subsequently be known as People Power. It raised a thorny question. Was it possible? Was it possible that a people, an euphemism-ism by their anger, armaments by their defiance, and by their sheer numbers, could tear down the tanks down like the walls of Jericho? Was it possible that a people driven only by a refusal to endure more, emboldened only by the need to make things better, could bid the guns fall still as razor-sharp steel in the chest of the oppressor? Was it possible that the people could decide the outcome of things, the turn of events, the tide of history in a far more blunt and direct way by—like Alexander slicing the Gordian knot—deliberately, elaborately, lawlessly ignoring it?

There would be no easy answers to that. In our discovered soon enough, while ending a tyranny was the hardest thing in the world to do, mounting a democracy in its place was even harder. And we discovered soon enough, as did People Power discovered soon enough too, while taking out the iconic bandmaster of misery was the hardest thing in the world to do, building a new one in its place was even harder. As Egypt will discover soon enough, while the people decide to express their will in three a deeper sense is the hardest thing in the world to do, allowing the people to express their will in how things will be done is even harder.

But for the moment, let us pause to wonder about or are another dazzling display of People Power and revel in that magnificent truth.

Ang mga mamamayan, hindi ang mga hayop, ang mga mamayan.

Reyes' defining moment in history

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES buried their fallen former chief of staff, Angelo Reyes, last Sunday with full military honors at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

The soldiers of the Republic closed ranks around their wake, bidding him in a hero, amid congressional investigations into the alleged irregularities involving the disbursement of military funds, during which he was accused of exerting huge influence on the military.

The witness came after Reyes also himself in the chair. Following the humiliation he received in the hands of inquisitorial senators in the Senate blue ribbon committee hearing, an ordeal that practically crushed a public-conscious man whose passage of Reyes to commit suicide and over the unfair-ness methods used by the investigators that an appeal even was subpoenaed by the Senate as well as its hearings (better described as torture chambers), of their conduct and dignity, as well as of members of their family.

In honoring one of their kind, the soldiers were serving notice that the military establishment do-not-like-to-be-humiliated. The Philippine democracy is the of harsh judgments of Reyes' actions as a politician in alleged corrupt handling of military funds.

Whether or not Reyes inherited an alleged corrupt system or was a greedy beneficiary of this entrenched corruption is not the issue. The issue is any officer who has risen in military service re-ached by his suicide. He can no longer shed light on the intricacies or complex nuances of this issue—including the socio-responsibility in the overnight of his passage out of this world. He can no longer answer on investigations Carlos Celdran and the special prosecutors were the plunder case hand by Garcia.

What is undeniable is that Reyes' death highlights the unique place that the military establishment, more than his person, is in the eyes his ill-hyped evenga practices involving disbursements of public funds.... a practice so true reprehensible does the historical revulsion to its civilian counterparts in the legislative and executive departments

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

of governments, which are now inquiring with hyperactivity and into how insane a the military establishment in spending its funds or whether it can be trusted as a custodian of these monies, in protecting the taxpayer from the predatory malice or lust-eighty greedy generals and colonels.

There is a peripheral player in this broader canvas of financial irregularities. He happens, by the circumstance of confluence of circumstances originated by his custody, to be a connection full pay-and-allowance documents using the privilege of legislative immunity as a platform to name names for his detention and actions (military or civilian related) in the past which have created the path of other public players in the same unjustified way. Here this had choked the country over the past two decades of his watch as an highest military leader.

It can be limited to say that all the efforts paid by the military to Reyes and all the actions rate heaped by his detractors on him, including the controversy over manner of his death, will meet inside this the background, in order way for the overwhelming majority left by him to a military leader in shaping the course of the history of this country in one of its most turbulent turning points of the past one period. This event was the moment when Reyes as chief of staff led the United Nations in January 2001 to withdraw-ing support from the elected government of President Joseph Estrada.

That withdrawal was, beyond dispute, the defining moment of Reyes' career as a soldier. It marked the birth of Edsa II, the sequel to Edsa I, whose 25th anniversary the nation is celebrating with grimace anniversary of the historical significance on Feb. 22-25, underscoring the ascendancy of Edsa I to Edsa II, while illustrating the transformation of the military as the people power in the Philippines in a span of 15 years (1986 to 2001). The economy also underlines the continuing importance of the military intervention in civil affairs as an arbiter of regime change.

The political role played by the generals and the power in precipitating Edsa II is the most illuminating lens through which to understand the dynamics of military intervention in the Philippines. This perspective helps to place in its historical context every Reyes' action and has disappointed even.

When General Reyes and the general staff walked up the steps at Edsa, at 6:30 p.m. on Fri-day, Jan. 19, 2001, where civilian leaders were assembled amid huge demonstrations against President Estrada, they did not only withdraw one of the military's support from his government, a new era was born. Reyes declared: "On behalf of the 113,000 strong Armed Forces of the Philippines, we wish to announce that we are withdrawing our support from the incumbent government. We will support his constitutionally mandated successor under Article 2, Section 3, of the Constitution ... the AFP now pledges the people and the duly constituted authorities, Reyes continued the declared Reyes' allegiance to Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. "we have turned our weapons behind us and there is no turning." Reyes declared in a thunderous tone settled up from a decade of a military people, mounting, "Soldiers of the people are taking no sound!"

This was born Edsa II, with a mandate from the 1987 Constitution that sprung from Edsa I. In the eyes of Reyes and his generals, they had executed a constitutional coup. But in reality in the second, the generals' walkout was an undisguised power grab. This is how people power became embedded in the 1987 Constitution legitimizing military intervention as an agent to "protect the people and the State."

Conscience and bishops' dictates

#0 (EN') told my mother that I was going on "the pill" right after the birth of my son, she breathed a sigh of relief but told me: "That's good. But remember you can't take Communion while you are on it."

That reminds me, too, of the story told by officials of Pro Natalia, which operates a network of clinics across Colombia, of how women would come to them just before they Mass to take their contraceptive pills so that they could receive what they want to do (have right after Easter) so here the device you took.

That I know millions Catholics work a compromise between what they believe are the teachings of the Church and their conscience and the demands of their daily lives, including the need to postpone, space or call it-not to have pregnancies. These they do without feeling that they are sinning. Their conscience is used, preserving their health as well as their already children and you plan timelines. Women, after all, are not machines. They are not meant to get pregnant every time they have sex. Their bodies, their sex lives, and their significantly, as do their partners, preferences, good homes and opinions.

Catholics for Responsive Health, whose name-classified explains what the group is all about, recently launched a campaign to support of the pending RH Bill and answered the primacy of individual conscience over magisterial teaching. "We strongly believe," the group said, "that couples, especially Catholics, have the right and responsibility to choose the path they will take in raising their family and have the social responsibility to act in accordance with their conscience and the decision within their disposal."

* * *

IN NOTE the statements of the CBCI and the recent Pastoral Letter issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, their word "conscience" surfaces. In their letter, the Catholic bishops assert, in view of advanced claims that the bill would "empower women with crude contraceptives," that "no one should be coerced by God our bodies are given to us to keep and nourish. We are stewards of our own bodies and must follow God's will on the matter according to an informed and right conscience. The clergy admits to other arguments against that "such a conscience must certainly be enlightened and guided by religious and moral teaching provided by various religions and ecclesial traditions respecting the human dignity and moral values of human life."

In other words, the bishops tell us: "using and following your conscience in all well and good, but only if you follow what we say."

So we learned a party-list representative and senatorial candidate Risa Hontiveros Baraquel puts it more elegantly in a letter of rebuttal to the CBCP: "Whatever gave you the idea that we decide about our bodies or sex life? Being wise in life without anchoring in our deepest inspirations, whether faith or humanism or the sheer sense of being a woman?" And she demands of the good bishops: "Could you not show a little more respect for us?"

Another woman, a blogger, warns that: "Not all Catholics blindly follow the church leaders," though I am not a Catholic, I support the Reproductive Health Bill. Just because I reject the CBCP Pastoral Letter does not make me less a Catholic."

* * *

In THE view of the CBCI statement, in fact, Catholics who do support the RH Bill are upholding the highest value of their faith, which is life. "The bill, if passed into law, is a significant responsible step in arresting the rise in maternal deaths from reproductive health infections and unwantedness-ness. We believe it will promote responsible parenthood, thus contributing to improving Filipino quality of family life. In addition to promoting a culture of health awareness and responsible health-seeking behavior among Catholic Filipinos, it will encourage them to have families they can afford to raise—with their means and moral beliefs."

"This is not about politics or religion," the CBCI asserts. "This is about responsible living and happy lives. This is about building churches such as we should have the chance to live a healthy, happy and dignified life. Catholics who are also called to be," declaring they are "Filipino Catholics who value life," the letter's signatories urge that "we all strive for unity among the entire people of God in this land. Divisions among equally-distinctive health should come rather than divide us as a Christian people."

* * *

AS MANY of you may already know, PNoy, after including the RH Bill as a "priority" measure that has the administration's backing, declared the day after the Pastoral Letter was released to the media that he supported the bill. The RH Bill would not be among those measures that Malacañang will fast-track.

In explanation, Malacañang spokesperson Sec-retary Ricky Carandang was quoted as being incensed at "bad faith" if he were to support the bill even as "statesman" while the bishops were still campaigning. But what of the "bad faith" shown to women and reproductive health advocates? While PNoy campaigned and early finished the bishops with issues under bishops and their even more conservative lay supporters, he has ostensibly refused to sit down with women's groups and advocates to discuss the bill. Even after his supposedly-crucial bishops' meeting, he has not yet met with them before his now-ostensibly and frequently declared his support for "responsible parenthood?" Must he wait for supposedly the right of parents to determine how many children they should have. Mr. President, that includes supporting parents' right to decide how MANY children they are to have, or if they have any? Or is your support for "responsible parenthood" is supporting the primacy of conscience over that of bishops' dictates, or of professed misguided consensus.

Leonor's love letters

LOOKING BACK

Anabelle R. Ocampo

Leonor Sirena had a whole cache of letters from Edsa that she saved until the day she met her husband to another soul. According to family here, she burned all those letters, gathered the ashes and placed them inside the funeral her wedding gown. The story makes romantic people swoon and listen but well. Some things just have to be kept private.

Fortunately, we have a few letters of Leonor to think that give us a sense of her personality and her relationship with a man who, depending on the family you ask, was using, happened to be her soulmate or her "kabit" (Feb. 14, 2011, which Valentine's Day was also).

Teenwood Ireland.

"I received your letter dated 30 of last month and I am fine and so is sickness.

"It's here we answered some letters, it was not because I'm bored corresponding with you. In fact, since I wrote to you, but on the day 10 Feb., nobody came to visit me at the college, so I dispersed them, and besides I was already exhausted.

"I am doubtful if the letter is yours, because the signature is different. Perhaps you have put another name. Just big but I might decipher it and if I decipher it, it will not be your name that written decipher but somebody else's. If that is what you have put, you are cruel to me. I have been longing glad I am when I receive one of your dear letters, but you did well in putting another name in case, as you say, it may fall into the hands of strangers."

Leonor signed her letter "Yolanda" then makes us wonder about all this secrecy: the use of pseudonyms, changing the text of penmanship, the fear that their letters would fall into wild hands and their love exposed. On Dec. 28, 1944, Leonor wrote Nilad and reassured:

"I was very much surprised that you had a letter for Pepe and none for me, but at last when they told me about it I did not believe it, because he did not expect that a person like you would do such a thing. But later I was convinced, as you were like a newly-married couple, very flushed and forgiven at the beginning, but afterwards it began to wither. Before, however, when I did not write you, you wrote me, but now no more. It seems that you have lavished my example where I have been a model to you. Now I am convinced, because I was left to my own house, and besides you know very well that you cannot hide any thing from those girls. I could very well write to Pepe, but to write that you stopped me not anything. I bid me, though Manila had surrendered to the Americans, I have been patient because you are at your home and nobody meddles with you. Truly I tell you that this very reasonable for what you have done and for another thing that I'll tell you later when you come.

"Because you writing and all the histories you find in it. Continued in your presence your time several which leaves your hand."

The letters show several very intimates and it is unfortunate that we do not have other letters to see the relationship of Leonor with Nilad. Unfortunately since we know he was engaged to spouse who was the only woman, with the exception of Teodora Alonzo, who could make the National Hero cry or melt like butter. I have given up on finding more letters and content myself with Leonor's letters, assuming six dots artistically during Valentine's Day.

Comments are welcome to my Facebook Fan Page.

Cupid's helpers

ing Valentine's Day is over too. allow me a minute from having to discuss rapidity and focus instead on the capitalism.

To be capitalism means to be filled with unnatural desire. Capitalism, on the other hand, isn't the stupidity and silliness that comes with falling in love, but excessive desire for the material, in other words to be greedy. In the latter sense, capitalism cannot be a form of rapidity.

My inspiration for today's column on the supermarket came from a short feature on ABC-5 (Kapamilya station) before, while they were using to interview people. ABC featured on three helpers: a Pakistani merchandiser, a Mexican mariachi band player and a former "witch doctor."

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

For the picture more? The helpers are people who are love going. Wondering the ABC feature got me thinking, for all the talk about the amorous Filipino, many do depend on foreign-ers to get laid. Is it because we are in the near human? Or is it because of space limitations, so we just don't see them interact-ers and, see which doctors but, for a want of a better term, charm peddlers.

First, the mariachimen. Even the most supersexual of Filipinos cannot hold a candle to the Latinos in get-em-and-get-laid department. Latinos' interest in, even if it means going through long circumstances of relatives of neighbors of-in-formants of friends. Others have discovered even more powerful intermediaries like the gays or drivers.

The Filipino exist not just because of distance but also because of the cultural distance some degree of role playing, i.e., being hard to get, and being discreet. Male audacity is appreciated, but can also be interpreted as excessive aggressiveness so even our Don Juans will try to spice up in stage of visible looking for sign interests.

Electronic matchmaker

In the last few years, Cupid's found new helpers, electron-ic ones. I'm referring to the Internet and its numerous match-making and dating sites. Many of these sites offer all the possible options, or should we say permutations: a man seeking a woman, a woman seeking a man, a man seeking a man, a woman seeking a woman. The sites can also be preferred age range (you can choose 18-to-30 if you're not sure), religion (including how selective and sophisticated and so on. The options don't end there; many sites allow you to state whether you're into just for the friend-ly (I'm reassuring myself), or you're looking for a lifetime partner.

Many sites are also functional, often with very strong Filipino presence. Sadly, some sites have banned Filipinos who reveal-ed the same with numerous ina-expletives, none of regularity.

Most of these sites are really electronic versions of the classified ads. The wonders of information technology allow you to search a database of your interests and characteristics of those who are posted.

Access on the Internet is still fairly limited in the Philippines but the cellphone has created new possibilities for better-or-Filipinos. There's the old reminders calling of many, been asking if you want to be a phone card or your vote bet. It is number of the process I'm also only involved in, with mobile-pinoys Dr. Bel Gallaga, we're finding quite surprised, cated networks and electronic "cities" to get people interested, and to keep Cupid's fires stoked, since tentative beings.

For all the proliferation of electronic Cupid assistants, there are still "old-fashioned" matchmakers around. The matchmakers are more numerous in societies where arranged marriages are still the norm, as in Pakistan and India.

The Pakistani matchmaker featured on ABC was clearly well-educated, fluent in English and well-connected with a computer in the background. The matcher, she explained, are made for people of all ages. She just had to matchmen one striking case: a man who was flying home to Pakistan (maybe from Singapore) to meet his wife, but had been in touch-more that he wanted to get a new one before leaving Pakistan again.

Locally, we still have arranged marriages, among Muslim Filipinos for example. There there's the ethnic Chinese community, where arranged marriages are disappearing but where-not-else introductions are still common. The matchmakers are usually relatives or friends of the families. "Introspect" with the families to facilitate a meeting. I've actually overheard my own parents on the phone, arranging for a young man to visit some bank, where someone's daughter is working as a teller.

Many of the ethnic Chinese are uncomfortable about this, but the arrangements sometimes do lead to dating, and a third ings. The ethnic Chinese are obsessed though those getting people married to somewhere the search making can become ludicrous, as when they try repeatedly to match young men who just aren't interested. In matters, and sincerest. A master of Cupid's arrows.

Guyana

Let's move now from the matchmakers to a kind of self-service, DIY (do-it-yourself) department, but still with Cupid's helpers on hand.

I've written in the past about Pasay mirasols, in front of Quiapo, a hardware store for those in search of all kinds of how-ems how, old how, how-how, uncomplicated.

Pitta, there's Quiapo's famous (and influenced natural pharmacy. The term "medicinal plants" is a misnomer because they sell materials of plant, animal and mineral origins. Some of the products are considered aphrodisiacs, others being crocodile penis, which sounds more potent when said in Tagalog and which always elicits attitudes like, "You mean's taste like kanuyo anyway?", "kanuyo" referring to rotating meat with gills tongues that who shouted on their motorcycles and respiratory problems.

For more ethnic-oriented love items on announcing a love of irresistible perfumes, there's always the handmade department in Quiapo, the malls selling sterling-sterling necklaces to protect from hatred as well as poisons or love charms. The pursuits range from bullets (which women can use but the boyfriend's to the unmentionable unseen (less films, which I've written about in the past.

There there are the candles. Some vendors sell "table" candles, colors coded depending on what you want to grasp for. If it's love seems other, go for the passion-ed, red candles. If it's more business-love, though there's involved, go for the black candles, including those shaped like tombstones. The vendors candle really "sang-sangayon"—you light them hoping to price your unfaithful lover's conscience. If that doesn't work, well, maybe something else will. The human candles are located in internet premises, murder with a bit of singing. Very, very set-ins-free, stupid! Until next time, sing-ay-ay-ay.

* * *

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How about direct Internet access for reporting anomalies to P-Noy?

PETCHAY [don't misrepresent me, allow this now], the editorial asked "The personnel" [because, 1/30/11] evoked requests for ultimate listeners who need we're supposed and honored.

How pervasive corruption has become these days! The alleged millions of pesos in jueteo and pasalubong give-away-nothing top officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines alone have millions some millions officials have to...ums. What a sadness, it indeed does a truth to the testimony of former military budget officer George Rabusa!

Expectedly, those accused of being behind or involved in the anomalous payrolls would deny the accusations. Still, the Filipino people deserve the right to know the truth. The Senate inquiry into this controversy should be continued and brought to its proper and just closure. The honest theft of public funds should be stopped.

The P-Noy presidency is anchored on the promise of transparency. "Kayang kaya ko." Yes, the Filipino people, are my boss.) The best assist President Aquino or lead us through the daang matuwid. Those to be appointed to his government should watch in lockstep with him on this straight road and should not turn out to be another batch of government officials merely feeding themselves with taxpayer money.

Without the citizens should be given assistance prevention and hope in their jobs if employed in government. To expose anomalies in government, every citizen should be allowed direct access to P-Noy through the Internet. This should give would be abusive officials second thoughts about engaging in shenanigans.

—BELEN DOCENA-ANGELO,
bdocena@yahoo.com

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Ban on live telecast of people's cases ironic

Section III, Sec. 7 of the Philippine Constitution states that the right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized.

The issue on whether or not to allow the live coverage of a trial has not been settled. Some insist that the controversial Hyatt 10 case should be aired to the public, except of course pending or mandatory cases on rape cases.

There is nothing in the Constitution or even international laws prohibiting the live telecast of court trials. Besides, live telecasts was a big help during the trial of the impeachment case against then President Joseph "Erap" Estrada. If the trial had not been televised, the people would not have known about it and could not have expressed their sentiments and opinions about it through People Power. Without the live telecast, there would be no People Power II. Without People Power II, the people would have continued to operate under illegally entrenched activities.

There is an many here, a criminal case is being prosecuted with the "People of the Philippines" as complainant. Then why should the people be denied their right to see and observe their case for themselves? And assuming that the expenses in media outlay are based in their reportage, their motive would prejudice the right of the people to know what is really happening in our country. Relying merely on media reports is not enough. The people should be allowed, as a matter of right, to observe the case for themselves.

The contingency resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them. The Filipino people have the right to scrutinize their own government, to change it and to or public it in such a way that it will promote their welfare. That is a clear expression that the Filipino citizens have the right to know what is happening in our country so that they will be able to react to or act on it on the basis of sound information.

Withdrawing the live telecast of a trial is tantamount to robbing the Filipino people to be blind to the truth, to be disinterested to knowing the truth.

The Supreme Court, being the highest court of the land, should not promote blindness and indifference to the pressing issues besetting our country. To allow this is to allow more injustice to happen because people will not be aware of the process done in prosecuting the offenders.

It is a pitch-in country where citizens are unaware of what is happening in their own land.

—LEONARD DE VERA,
devera4ever@gmail.com

Higher fares render more Filipinos poorer

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications, through its spokesman Undersecretary Jesse Villaroz, missed the point when it advised the public to simply save on text messages to cope with the increase in MRT/LRT fares. That was callous advice. It symbolized a manner of gross ignorance to people.

The DotC is not the reason the MRT/LRT fares are being raised. While it is true that people can always save money by reducing the number of text messages they send through their cellphones, it is not a solution to the problem. What the DOTC must do is to ensure that public transportation service is accessible, orderly and affordable to ordinary citizens.

And it must make that transportation, along with other social services like education, health and housing, be given a higher budget. It must call for a national allocation for this purpose, and it must limit the realm of anomalous corruption activities like Pander Bonds and the Hyatt 10 case. Let the people know where their money is going.

Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte appealed to the public for calm. She should use public transportation for at least a month without her privileges and with a daily transportation budget of P60 only. She should stay with a family in an urban poor community where water supply is scheduled and residents have to fall in line before they can use a bathroom and learn to practically race and wrestle for a train ride. Let her experience, even just for a day, the life of an ordinary MRT/LRT commuter.

Who seems not to be aware that for so long millions of commuters have been keeping their peace and have remained oh so passive in jampacked train carrying loads beyond their heavy damaged use or till each other. In the face of flash crises and circumstances, the Filipino people have proven their capacity to cope.

Against how includes some 1.2 million commuters. They are no longer passive now because of higher MRT/LRT fares!

—HERBERT DELOSA,
Bgy. Sinisabatan
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Book author seeks help of honest gov't lawyers

MAY HEAR Mendoza in a picture of courage. She will come in government, most specifically those who are honest and intact!) seeking for the public good, willingly do something or campaign in the forum of civil law and procedure.

I am having the same difficulty speaking out for the national good. I need to speak for the reads, but the deterrent is our legal system have been discouraging me.

I am the author of a self-published book, "An Indictment of the Legal System," which is displayed by the American network Microsoft Inc. on its worldwide webpage—an obvious violation of my right.

I sought the advice of the Intellectual Property Office in Makati, but I was discouraged by one of the lawyers from filing a case in court. I am already 74 years old and getting weaker. I can't have an honest soul in the government to get justice who can help me.

—ERNESTO SILLY MACHEDO,
ernestosillymachedo@gmail.com

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Across the NATION

Palace says ARMM failed experiment

By Norman Bordadora and Jocelyn Uy

PRESIDENT Aquino believes the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was a failed experiment in autonomy so elections there should be postponed, one of Mr. Aquino's spokespersons said.

Edwin Lacierda, Palace spokesperson, said Mr. Aquino wants reforms in the ARMM first before elections are held there.

"We met with the President yesterday and the President believes that the ARMM elections should be postponed," said Lacierda in a press briefing in Malacañang yesterday.

"The President is proposing certain reforms to address the causes of rebellion and hopelessness in ARMM," Lacierda said.

Lacierda said Mr. Aquino wants to synchronize the ARMM elections with the midterm national elections in 2013. "For the sake of economy" and to stop the practice of using "captive voting blocs that keep regional leaders in power and enables them to sell voting blocs to the highest bidder in national elections."

"That's the problem in the past and looking at ARMM it really presents a failed experiment. (The) ARMM is a failed experiment in terms of the aspirations of the Filipino people to give justice to our Muslim brothers," Lacierda said.

AERIAL view of Jolo, Sulu, during recent floods there. Sulu is part of the ARMM, which Palace officials described as a failed experiment in autonomy

Failed substate

"The President wants reforms to be put in place," Lacierda said. "The framers of ARMM is a failed substate."

He said the President wants to appoint officers in charge in the region that would oversee the implementation of reforms there.

"The main reason for the President postponing the elections is for reforms to take place. It can only happen when it is postponed and are appointed (interim) officials to have a clean slate," Lacierda said.

"Again, this is to better the state of governance in ARMM," he said.

On opinions that appointing officials was unconstitutional, Lacierda said it is a legal issue. "Hindi nan be-resolved."

"Let me just state that the President has residual powers under the Constitution," he said.

"Subject to need a duster. Those who are against the postponement of the elections, in a way would deter reforms from happening," Lacierda said.

"This is the personal preference of the President," he said.

Caretaker government

A network of civil society organizations, which launched the I am for Peace and Development in Mindanao (I PACT) movement yesterday, called on lawmakers to postpone the ARMM elections and set up a caretaker government in the region instead.

In a forum hosted by the Catholic Media Network in Intramuros yesterday, members of the group said the elections must be delayed until genuine reforms are put in place.

"Elections in the ARMM are determined by the traditional and warlord politicians who use guns, guns and gold in cling to power," Tampakan Mayor Jansen Pendato Diocoloda said at the forum yesterday.

She said elections results in ARMM do not reflect the true will of the people.

"(I)t believe that there will be no real election and real democracy if these questions of election fraud and massive corruption are still prevalent," she said. "An election now will not answer the problem."

Rise in juvenile crimes prompts stricter curfew

By Shiena M. Barrameda
Inquirer Southern Luzon

NAGA CITY—Alarmed by the rise in the number of crimes involving juvenile offenders here and in the rest of Camarines Sur, city officials have started to actively enforce a 7 p.m. curfew for unaccompanied minors.

Ordinance No. 2006-072, or the Curfew for Minors, prohibits anyone below 18 years old from being out on the streets from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. unless they are in the company of parents or guardians.

Mayor John Bongat said the stricter implementation of the law would help discourage crimes from being committed by minors, especially those used by gangs taking advantage of the juvenile justice law.

"The aim is not to prosecute our kids and protect these children from getting into trouble and from bad influences," Bongat said.

"This will also serve as a reminder to parents that problems like these also require their attention. This is not just a problem for the police, barangay tanod and the city government. We also need their cooperation."

Bongat said officials of the city's 27 barangays would also be asked to tune in to a special radio frequency and report peace and order situations in their communities every 9 p.m., or an hour before the curfew starts.

Callers or called units may also report certain incidents and ask for assistance through telephone numbers 472-6108 or 811-1000, the mayor said.

The city welfare office had noted the rise of criminality involving minors, with 23 cases recorded from January to August last year compared to 23 for the whole year of 2009.

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In Zambo, woman stabs hubby for canceled date

ZAMBOANGA CITY—For failing to take her out on a date on Valentine's Day a man suffered stab wounds near his heart inflicted by his wife, police said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Edwin de Ocampo, acting city police director, said prior to Valentine's Day, Salma Tehseng, 27, had asked her husband for a date. The husband, Jamal, 30, agreed.

De Ocampo said on Monday, Fatima made several calls to Jamal, who was then working, to remind him about their date.

He said the wife felt upset when Jamal refused to commit to the date, stating he was busy with work.

"The husband said he was busy and he can't leave his job to go with her," De Ocampo said.

In an attempt to convince her husband for the last time, Fatima decided to personally see Jamal and went to his office, which was just walking distance from the couple's house, De Ocampo said.

To her dismay, Fatima learned her husband out of the office earlier that day, according to De Ocampo.

The policeman said Fatima had suspected her husband of going out on a date with another woman.

De Ocampo quoted Jamal's coworkers as saying Fatima appeared restless and was irritated after failing to find her husband in the office.

The coworkers, said De Ocampo, called up Jamal asking him to return to the office.

Jamal returned and, upon seeing him, Fatima confronted him with a bladed weapon, wounding him in the chest.

Jamal was brought to a hospital and declared in stable condition. De Ocampo said the couple settled the fight but Jamal's mom if the incident. They date pushed through, Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

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The National Water Resources Board and the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank

invite

Individuals and Firms with Small Water Utility Experience

The Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) is an international partnership to help poor people gain sustained access to improved water and sanitation services. Administered by the World Bank with financial support from several bi- and multilateral and private donors, WSP is a decentralized partnership and operates through offices in Africa, East Asia, Latin America and South Asia. A major thrust of the program is to help its clients prepare for and implement actions towards meeting the water and sanitation-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Program works with partners at the country, regional and international levels assisting countries to build capacity, reform policies, strengthen institutions and develop human resources. In East Asia, the program currently operates offices in 5 countries—Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Vietnam— with the regional office located in Jakarta, Indonesia.

WSP Philippines is currently implementing a technical assistance project with the National Water Resources Board which aims to mainstream the strategic improvement and investment planning approach developed in Phase 1 of the Small Water Utilities Improvement and Financing Project. This will be accomplished by NWRB's accreditation of technical service providers who will assist small water utilities to improve their performance and increase their access to market based finance in line with the Government Water Sector Financing Strategy.

NWRB and WSP Philippines invite individuals and firms with water utility experience to apply for accreditation under the Accreditation of Technical Service Providers (ATSP) Program of the NWRB. The ATSP Program intends to accredit about 120 INDIVIDUAL experts and FIRMS allocated to the different regions of the country. Experts residing outside the NCR will therefore have an edge.

These experts are expected to assist a potential of 2,000 small water utilities improve their service delivery and attain self-sufficiency. The work is very intermittent but the volume will depend on the expert's desire and availability to secure more contracts.

Professionals who have at least 5 years experience in utility operations or utility consultancy work in either of the fields in technical, financial and institutional development are enjoined to participate. Firms (NGOs, professional organizations and consulting companies) with such personnel expertise can likewise be accredited.

For more information and for application, log on to http://www7.dent.gov.ph/NWRB/AccreditationSystem/

Deadline for application is on **March 8, 2011**

PANGASINAN Rep. Kimi Cojuangco reads to pupils of Carmen Elementary School the story of a grandmother whose rising hair saved her village from a typhoon. The schoolkids, who were victims of Bondo-Bondo Resident, Pangasinan, in 2009, joined the Inquirer Read-Along held at UH City Resales on Thursday.

In Pangasinan, a story these kids can relate

By Yolanda Sotelo
Reader, Pangasinan

THE PUPILS' EYES widened in excitement as each of them was handed a story-book during the Inquirer Read-Along in Rosales town in Pangasinan last week.

It was the first book they owned after their belongings were washed away by the Bondo-Bondo flash flood in Barangay Carmen East in 2009. Their school, Carmen Elementary School, was also damaged.

"We lost all our textbooks. So we are very happy that the Inquirer gave them storybooks that they can call their own," said Merly Bolias, a Grade 4 teacher.

During the Read-Along session at SM City Rosales on Feb. 10, more than 300 children listened to Pangasinan Rep. Kimi Cojuangco read "Ang Pambihirang Buhok ni Lola" (Grandma's Extraordinary Hair)," written by Rene Villanueva and illustrated by Barry Cinco-Cinco.

Cojuangco read the story's English version, but would translate each sentence to Filipino as she asked questions to the pupils.

She placed teacher in the hot—she would call children to stand before the group, put her arm around them, and make them read a sentence or two, then ask the rest in English (with meaning in Filipino) how a Filipino word's meaning in English.

"Ang Pambihirang Buhok ni Lola" is about a grandmother with a bi-meter-long hair. She used her hair to str famous and refused to keep them from being blown away by a series of typhoons hit their village.

The typhoon scene in the story is familiar among the children, who said they had learned to prepare way before any typhoon arrives.

But they seemed not at all affected by the experience of 2009, when Bondo-Bondo became the face of the widespread flooding in Pangasinan. They eagerly raised their hands and raced to answer Cojuangco's questions.

Courage, cooperation

The children were now treated to a story of courage and cooperation read by one of their own—11-year-old Samantha Cin Bervia, an intermediate-class champion.

Bervia read "Ang Unggit Laban Kay Bondoska," a story written by Rene Villanueva and Von Agabe, and illustrated by Rahne Calleja. It tells of how a school of small fish, because they were united, fought off a big fish named Bondoska.

Bervia captured the children's attention by asking them to produce sounds to accompany the story she was reading. The pupils, despite the relaxed atmosphere, proved they understood the story well as they answered questions followed by the program hosts, Inquirer correspondent Carlo tel Cardenas and SM City Rosales public relations officer Evelyn Del Rosario Melendez.

'Wonderful project'

Cojuangco called the Read-Along a "wonderful project."

"I am a mom and I used to read to my children when they were growing up and I see that the they were ahead of their classmates in school. I congratulate the Inquirer for encouraging the children to read," she said.

She said books read to children should not only be those written in Filipino, but also those written in English. "Dito ni for their own good, so they can get a good job in the future," she said.

She encouraged the children to learn English because it is spoken globally.

After the Read-Along session, the children brought their books to school and read them in front of class. They also colored the drawings, Bolias said.

"They are really happy about getting free books. The Read-Along is a big help even in our teachers," she said.

Another teacher, Marina Corpuz, said he asked his pupils to read the books, and then he asked questions after they had read them to test their comprehension.

Corpuz handles the grade fourth, fourth and fifth pupils. Most of the pupils have difficulty reading. "But they want to read the book, and I am glad that there is enthusiasm among them now to learn to read," he said.

Aside from the books donated by Ubod Publishing and the Abono party-list group, the children received toys from the Shell Foundation and snacks from Metro Dumex and Ice Breaker Scramblers.

CHESS champion Samantha Cin Bervia, made to follow

A gift of eye center for poor

IN A DIFFERENT kind of welcome for 2011, civic and medical volunteers opened in Bacolor town last month an eye center for the poor in Pampanga.

Sylvia Cristobal, secretary-general of the Kapampangan Development Foundation (KDF), a group of professionals who help their kababayan (countrymen), said the eye center was the fruit of cooperation and working together.

The Jesus A. Jose Medical Center (JAMC) dedicated half of the second floor as space for the center before he died in 2006. Ours began constructing the hospital from his savings at a district to the United States, extending the facility to the second floor, Cristobal said.

The Love for Life Foundation, which owns the building, and the David Angeles-Inza Memorial Foundation find ways and resources to run the JAMC.

On the other hand, the World Medical Relief Inc. (WMRI) fitted the facility with surgery equipment, such as the PHACO machine, including laser machine for cataract surgery.

After the inauguration, WMRI president George Samson, a Kapampangan, promised to provide more machines.

Doctors Dan Bolcena, Joselito Carreon, and Sabino Santos Jr. and his sons, Ormus and Isidore Joseph, completed the initial team of volunteer ophthalmologists. To celebrate the collaboration, the facility was named JAMC-WMRI Eye Center, Dolcelito said.

Samson thanked the KDF and its more than 50 partner organizations, and urged them to "continue being angels of mercy."

"You help the poor because God loves them," he said, echoing the words of WMRI founder, the late Irene Ambrose.

Initially, a optometrist from Chicago, Ill., gave eyeglass duties, medicines and stuff to employees in the Korean War in the 1950s after seeing their condition on television. She then asked soldiers to carry on their backpacks the supplies and deliver them to an orphanage.

Before she died in 1101, Ambrose willed that her body be donated to Peace State University in Iowa for medical studies.

The KDC chaired by businessman Manuel V Pangilinan, has established partners and resources since 2008 to provide artificial legs to 241 people, wheelchairs to 173 people, and assist hearing and cleft problems of 623 people, most of them children.

The KDF said the Physicians for Peace are considering their pharmacy laboratory from the Clark Freeport to the JAMC to make it more accessible to persons with disabilities, Dolcelito said.

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office has granted the KDF at least P2 million a year to pay for its for health services to indigent patients, she said. Soneito Ordaz

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CHAMBER OF MINES SLAMS DISINFORMATION ON MINING

On the Issue of Gerry Ortega, Palawan Province and Mining

With the filing of charges by the family of Gerardo Ortega against certain individuals purportedly responsible for his murder, it is now time for us to air our side. The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines condoles with the family of Gerry Ortega. We point out that these individuals that have been charged have no connection to the large-scale mining sector that we represent. We deplore how the large-scale mining industry has been alluded to by certain parties as being behind the heinous crime. It was highly irresponsible of them to do so. We also condemn the misinformation that in the process has been used by these parties against the large-scale mining sector. We would like to make the following points:

- Palawan is now being made the center of controversy. These parties accuse the industry of denuding the primary forest of the province, in the process creating floods. For the information of all, large-scale mining cannot take place in old growth or virgin forests, proclaimed watershed forest reserves, mangrove forests, mossy forests, national parks, and other areas defined by law and in areas expressly prohibited under the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) under R. A. No. 7986, DAO No. 25, series of 1992 and other laws.

- It is ridiculous to imagine that mining can ever be done in the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River or the Tubbataha Reef Marine Park, both UNESCO World Heritage sites, or in El Nido or similar places in Palawan. The fact that these parties allege that the industry is looking to mine in these areas is preposterous!

- These parties also accuse the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) of accommodating mining interests. We are not apologists for the PCSD, but the records will show that the PCSD, out of a number of large-scale applications, have approved two in 2006, four in 2007, five in 2008, zero in 2009, and three in 2010. The total area that has been approved during the past five years is approx. 19,000 hectares, or 1.3% of the approximately 1.4 million hectares of land of the province. None of these areas have yet to be developed into a mine. There is only one large-scale mine currently operating in Palawan and not all the PCSD-approved applications will likely be developed into a mine. Even if they do get developed, the aggregate area is still miniscule.

- The parties so critical of the industry may perhaps be referring to small-scale mining, and no doubt they are unaware of the difference between large and small scale. For the information of the public, large-scale mining is under the jurisdiction of the DENR and covered by the 1995 Mining Act. The monitoring of the required environmental and social programs of large-scale mines by the DENR can only be described as extremely rigid. Small-scale mining, in contrast, is under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Units and is governed by the People's Small Scale Mining Act of 1991. We do not know how many small scale mines operate in Palawan or whether there are any environmental or social prescriptions that they adhere to.

- Palawan is the largest province in the country and its land area indicates varied uses. There are areas that are not primary forests, or suitable for tourism or such other purposes. These areas are suitable for agriculture, where appropriate, and for industrial development such as mining and mineral processing, also where appropriate. A balanced form of development with its multiple beneficial land use is but logical. An unbalanced form of development, where the entire province is declared a 'protected' area when in fact not all areas are in that category, deprives the province of the development that various forms of industrial activity can provide. That would surely be a prescription for poverty!

- Contrary to the allegations by these parties, the municipality of Bataraza, host of the large-scale Rio Tuba mine and the world-class Coral Bay processing plant, is not poor. Bataraza is in fact a first-class municipality! It has seen its population grow from 15,510 in 1975 when the mining operations started to an estimated 58,000 today. This is an example of how a large-scale mining operation serves as a catalyst for development. The combined Rio Tuba-Coral Bay operations fund over P60 million a year in terms of the required Social Development Management Plan (SDMP), although actual expenditures far exceed this amount. Part of the overall expenditures includes an elementary and high school (total enrolment of 1,250 students) and a hospital (over 2,000 patients per year), both of which are available to community residents free of charge. Housing has also been provided for the indigenous peoples in the area in collaboration with Gawad Kalinga, with over 200 units constructed to-date, and an Alternative Learning System with nine teachers in the payroll.

- These parties like to talk about God's creation and calling it a sin to 'rape and abuse divine blessings...". Are they not aware that mineral resources are also divine blessings? Without minerals, which have served to vastly improve the world we live in, and our ability to find and properly use them, we go back to the Dark Ages.

The Chamber of Mines considers the importance of both biodiversity protection in developmental efforts and the importance of transforming mineral resources into wealth for the country's development and for the good of its people. It is not a question of pitting one against the other. It is a question of how both can be developed together, which to us is the essence of Sustainable Development.

The Chamber of Mines, representing the large-scale mining sector, considers responsible mining as paramount, with strict adherence to our laws to which all its members are committed to, in particular those that pertain to environmental protection and social development.

FOOTBALL FEVER Young soccer players from different schools in Cebu try out for slots in a regional competition at the Abellana football field. JOY CANTOS, CARLOS CELDRAN

DepEd, smitten by Azkals, to develop football talents

From page A1

taking off with the unprecedented exploits of the team named after rusty dogs.

The Department of Education (DepEd) chief is considering developing specialized schools for sports, where students with athletic potential would undergo focused training.

2 promotion groups

"There are two groups—I will not mention their names yet—who would like to promote football in schools. I'll also start talking to football associations to see how public schools could be supportive of a nationwide program," Luistro told the Inquirer.

He said he was awed by Philippine stamina by the game when he caught the last 20 minutes of the match between the Azkals and Montpelier at National Stadium in Bacolod City last week.

"I caught the second goal and I think that really, it's a game for Filipinos... You could really feel the crowd," Luistro said.

"I think the Azkals have changed the way Filipinos look at football. Now we need to redirect that and see, this to push for a [school-based] program that is in line with the national programs," he added.

Popular in Visayas

Luistro said efforts to develop a school football program must focus on towns or cities where residents are known to have a natural inclination for the sport.

He said football, long eclipsed by basketball in the national sports consciousness, has long been enjoying popularity in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Specialized schools should also be developed as "there are not too many schools that have spaces big enough for football."

FLAVOR OF THE YEAR The Philippine Azkals celebrate their 2-0 victory over Mongolia in a qualifying match at Panaad Stadium in Bacolod City on Feb. 9. The Azkals have sparked intense interest in football among mostly basketball-crazed Filipinos. ERIKA SOMAGUIDO

"To support football even in public schools without big playing fields, we can look for open area in elementary football—futsal," Luistro said.

Specialized high schools

"I think that would be a sustainable way. There are could 638 identify specialized high schools which we could support with a full blown football sports program," he added.

The DepEd has long been planning to develop specialized high schools for sports, the actual technical vocational training as part of the proposed K+12 (kindergarten plus 12 years) program, an expansion of the 10-year basic education cycle.

The proposal, which aims to develop highly employable high school graduates, is undergoing public consultations that are set to culminate in April.

Typewriter, what's that? Visit '25 Years of Inquirer' exhibit

From page A1

City offers kids without any memory of those days and old folks who wish to remember the ardors of the past a glimpse of old remotes, photos, typewriters and other memorabilia reflecting the beginnings and growth of the business.

Memories on display include artworks, cartoons, old photographs, reproductions of the business's front pages and shells representing the business museum. Gopito the rambus...a chronicle of the paper's history since 1985.

Visitors to the exhibit on the mall's fourth floor may also write their thoughts and suggestions on a message board.

"What we wanted is for people to have a chance to see the business's history closely as related with the country's history," business president and CEO Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez said at the launch.

"It's such a wonderful experience to be able to look back at history. The heart of the exhibit is that the business can connect both with the old and [young]."

She joked that some children, who grew up in the age of computers and its tech gadgets, may not have even seen an old typewriter in their entire lives.

Marilyn R. Prieto, mother of Romualdez and business board chair, said: "Some children today only listen to music, play internet to games. They don't know what's happening in the outside world."

Feb. 15-25

Prieto, Romualdez and other company officials poured yesterday's launch. The exhibit runs from Feb. 15 to 25.

Connie Rabaquino of the business's corporate affairs office said the exhibit's target audience included "those as young as 10 years old and even those as old as 50, 60 so they can see the business's history for themselves."

The exhibit is open to multigenders, who can take turns to have their pictures taken as a photo booth or even get magazines for free, for as long as the supplies last, Rabaquino said.

The newspaper celebrated its 25th anniversary on December last year. This month's exhibit was timed to coincide with the nation's 25th year commemoration of the 1986 Edsa revolt.

LOOKING BACK Outstanding photos, editorial cartoonists, awards and replicas of Page 1 are on exhibit at SM North Edsa Atrium in Quezon City. MC GARCIA

Marcos, Aquino

The display includes both published and unpublished photos, attendant replies and the newspaper's numerous awards.

Those who are into at least can view some 60 to 65 small frames which were painted by children in 25th anniversary in December last year. This month's exhibit was timed to coincide with the nation's 25th year commemoration.

"It would be nice for the kids to see what they painted after two years," Rabaquino said.

The exhibit depicts milestones in the nation's history, beginning with the surveillance in 1986 of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Other from page reproductions show the nation's grief at the passing of former President Corazon Aquino, poignantly captured on the Aug. 2, 2009, issue, which adopted a yellow motif.

And who can miss out on Bonnie's Jun Aburrero witty and biting editorial cartoons on the Opinion page and, at times, on Page 11?

Sturdy Olympia

Some "curious" items on display are an old typewriter and an ancient Nikon camera.

Publisher Isagani Yambot looked fondly at the white Olympia typewriter which he said was assigned to him in 1989.

"I've been using it since then. But I guess it's a lot older than that. I still use it on BIR tax forms. I'm a bit 'low-tech,'" he chuckled.

The Nikon camera and a blue snowman's suit with the markings "Philippine Daily Inquirer" belonged to the business's former chief photographer, the late Johnny Vilena.

Ernie Sarmiento, the newspaper's current chief photographer, has kept the two items in his custody.

'Relevance and bite'

And for those who wish to take home a piece of business history, there's the business book "From Ninoy to Noynoy." The softbound edition sells for P1,500 and the hardbound reprint P3,500.

The exhibit is open to all.

"I really want to invite people to see our history and its significant points where Filipinos came together. This is to always remember the spirit of Edsa, which is about change, truth and courage," Romualdez said.

Prieto said Romualdez believes the business will continue to be relevant to the nation's future.

"I think it will be relevant to everybody's lives," Prieto said.

Romualdez said: "Never will we lose the business's relevance and bite ... For PIA, I think it's the best deal in town."

Palace: COA chair has to go, term ended Feb. 2

From page A1

April 15, 2008, now by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the Commission on Appointments. The then President was nominating Villar as COA chair "vice Guillermo Carague for a term expiring on 02 February 2011."

Hold new chair?

Lucenito said the Palace was looking for a new COA chief and other people who could fill up positions in the agency.

"As you know it's now a season of nominating, so it's important to appoint men and women with integrity and who have a clean record," he said.

He was referring to the bare battle being fought by Senate state auditor Heidi Mendoza who exposed at congressional hearings how former administration comptroller Carlos Garcia allegedly plundered military funds.

Asked whether Mendoza was being eyed as the next COA chief, Lucenito said that President Aquino did not mention any specific position for her when they talked recently.

"When we met with Heidi Mendoza, the President only said if she was open to return to government. That's what the President said and the last time I talked to her, she said she was praying about it," Lucenito said.

He said Mendoza's capability and skills could be put to good use in the government's fight against corruption and in auditing the nation's funds.

The President earlier said he wanted to offer Mendoza a job in government, especially in the fight against corruption.

Tonight, for reaction posting, Villar said that he had been meeting with colleagues about the Palace statement and would comment on it today.

Earlier, Villar said he believed that his term would expire in 2015, since he was only appointed COA chair in 2008. A COA chair, like a commissioner, has a seven-year term.

At the time of this appointment, Villar had been with the COA for four years as commissioner.

He also pointed out that when he was appointed COA chair, a new commissioner was named to serve his unexpired term.

Villar's appointment as COA chair has been questioned in the Supreme Court on the ground that it constitutes reappointment, which is barred under the Constitution for commissioners of constitutional bodies.

The petition also opposed Villar's position that his term as COA chair should end in 2015.

Settle amicably

Told that Villar was insisting in a television interview that his term as COA chair would end in 2015, Lucenito said it would be good if the issue could be resolved amicably.

"So, in all likelihood, it will be prudent for both parties to discuss things. But again, we have to receive instructions from the President on that," Lucenito said. MAR ARGUELLES and report from Leila Salaverria

VILLAR file photo/RICHARD ESTOCE

SPORTS

Obamas meet with Pacquiaos

By Ronnie Nathaniel

MANAGUA: Sen Manny Pacquiao and wife Jinkee will meet with US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama at the White House on Tuesday afternoon (Wednesday in Manila).

The Pacquiaos would first visit Majority Leader Harry Reid on Capitol Hill at 9:45 a.m. and have lunch with the distinguished senator from Nevada, whom Pacquiao endorsed at a final political rally in Las Vegas in the last US elections.

Senator Reid was instrumental in arranging the country's call on the First Couple.

Pacquiao's adviser Michael Koncz told the Inquirer that only Pacquiao and Jinkee will meet with the Obamas and that the meeting will follow a Washington press conference to promote his WBO welterweight showdown with Shane Mosley on May 7 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

Koncz said Team Pacquiao was staying at the historic Hay Adams, an elegant downtown Washington DC luxury hotel with a view of the White House.

Reid said Pacquiao arrived in the US capital following a train ride aboard the Acela Express from New York City which took you to three hours.

Top Rank promoter Bob Arum, who traveled with Pacquiao, was overjoyed at the media turnout which included reporters and columnists from the New York Times, the New York Daily News, the Wall Street Journal and CBS, the network that owns Showtime which will telecast the Pacquiao-Mosley fight and air three special episodes in a build-up to the May 7 showdown.

WITH AU Pouk (left) and Jimmy Alapag leading a deep offense, Talk 'N Text aims to go for a defensive-minded lineup.

Teams plug holes with import picks

THE 'BIG' squads in the PBA decided to plug holes in hiring their imports, with reigning champion Talk 'N Text hoping that defense-oriented Paul Harris will help the Tropang Texters nail an import-flavored crown.

The Texters will parade Paul Harris in the coming Commissioner's Cup, with all rosters save for Air21 ready to unveil their rendezvous when the new conference opens on Feb. 18.

The 6-foot-5 Harris, playing out of Syracuse, has been practicing with the Texters since the Philippine Cup, which Talk 'N Text won in six games over Air21Super Express.

He was a second All-USA team member in 2006 during his high school years at Niagara Falls and Notre Dame Prep in Massachusetts.

"He may be the best defensive import we might see to have played here," said Texters coach Chot Reyes of the 24-year-old Harris, who leads a deep offensive roster led by Jimmy Alapag, Jason Castro, Kelly Williams, Ryan Reyes and Ali Peek.

The Texters have yet to win a championship from import-laden conferences.

Barangay Ginebra signed 6-foot-3 hunter Nathan Bransfield, who coach Jong Uichico says can play enough of an inside game to augment the Kings' guard-heavy rotation.

Philippine Cup runner-up San Miguel signed up Eric Stevens, who came in at 6-1 and 33 lbs when officially announced by the Commissioner's Office. Derby duo ordered another lineup with 7-3 Robert Brown Jr.

Meralco, meanwhile, utilized 2009 UE NCAA Alaskadeh champion Anthony Davidson of the University of Mexico. Alaska hooked up with former Phobe Purves player Larry Demetrius while Oceanside topped Nenad Canca out of Notre Dame.

Rain or Shine tabbed Hasaan Adams, the only import who boasts NBA credentials. Adams had stays with the New Jersey Nets and the Toronto Raptors.

Air21 has decided to replace 6-1 Japan draft. Team manager Allen Ungania said they are eyeing Alpha Sangura who played for Libya in the 2009 Fiba Africa Championship.

Unified cycling team for SEA Games

By Jure Navarro

A UNIFIED cycling team is again being mulled for the Philippine Sports Commission to reinstate the allowances of the national riders.

PSC Chair Ritchie Garcia points that said the conflicting groups in the sport—one headed by Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham Tolentino and the other led by Philip Ella Juico—have agreed to form a combined pool of riders for the Southeast Asian Games.

Once the list of riders from both groups are completed, Garcia said the leaders of the two groups should justify the roster before the PSC could bring back the allowances of the cyclists, which were put on hold since January.

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PANA

PH Cuppers confident vs Japan squad

By Cedrik F. Tupas

JAPAN HAS gotten the Philippines' number on its last two Davis Cup ties, but officials of the PH squad are confident that the Japanese domination will end when the two nations clash in a Group 1 tie in Shizuoka titled to Tokyo from March 4 to 6.

Philippine Davis Cup administrator Stanley Villanueva and captain Chris Castro were wise in saying that the Japanese will be vulnerable as the road they used of the Plantation Bay Resort, citing the Filipinos' edge in the familiarity of the surface, the weather condition and the support of the hometown crowd.

"Those Japanese players are tough and they are already world-ranked," said Castro at the Pint Sorata somewhat at the Makati's UN Avenue Branch. "But they are used to fast courts and that would be our advantage."

"We're going to bring the heat to them," declared Rainy Villanueva, referring to the hot and humid weather conditions here.

The Philippines will field Cecil Mamiit, Treat Conrad Huey, Johnny Arcilla and Elbert Acosta for the tie against Japan. It's the same squad that pulled off a dramatic 3-2 victory over South Korea to remain in Group 1.

"We decided to bring back the same team (that handled) Korea after losing down 0-2," said Villanueva in the line-up announced by Bagsic Orchid Battery and Mallery's.

The odds will be stacked against the Filipinos, who have not won against the Japanese since 1995, when Joseph Lucero and Robert Angelo helped score a 3-2 win in the groundbreaker's favor Group 1 win in 1995.

Japan is expected to parade an array of world-ranked players like Go Soeda (106), Yuhei Suzuki (314), Yoshihito Mutoi (406), Yoshi Ingles (177) and Tatsuyoshi.

"We heard that Japan will field a different lineup but these are all speculations," said Villanueva.

PHI14 Cecil Mamiit in the lead. The Philippines hopes to beat Japan in the Davis Cup for the first time since 1995.

New faces to light up PBL return

By Jasmine W. Payo

EXPECT SOME promising finds when the restored Philippine Basketball League (PBL) unfolds on March 12 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Manila.

League officials said yesterday that several talented rookies will save their teams in the league that drew recently some of the top amateurs led by Asenso's Eric Salamat, Ilan Sotelino's Calvin Abueva and UE's Paul Lee.

"Expect will be some hotshots and PEL-type players who are going to play," said league chief Ding Canoza of Pinoys.

"Right now, we're more concentrated on getting the PBL all the ground and rebuilding the league," new commissioner Nobi Hernandez said in the PBA Heroes or Shakey's On Session in Quezon.

Sacrificed—the last team to capture the crown before the league indefinitely closed shop March last year—aims for another shot at the 6th against Phatex, Cebu Energy Detail, Agusanon FCA and Café Pioneer.

Officials added to the teams presented by Shakey's, Pepsi and Chelsea Battery that negotiations are ongoing with NBN 4 for the games' television coverage.

Sports Vision, the outfit behind the successful staging of the Shakey's Fiesta and Basketball Philippines Series, will also oversee the technical and venue operations and officiating.

PAL INTERCLUB

Del Monte is key, says Barons' ace

By Marvey R. Castillo

THE TURNING point in this year's Seniors' and Men's Philippine Airlines Interclub battles will be Del Monte, their bonding, up-and-down layout in Miranda Norfolk, Bulacan, which will be dressed nothing but protection and utmost play from the field to the next two weeks.

Tommy Manotoc, the ageless Cebuano star who will suit up for the Negat Barons in both events, believes this to be so, especially with the Cebuanos' Rapid-designed, par-72 gem expected to play even longer because of fairways softened by rains the past week.

"It's a straight hitter's course," the 47-year-old Manotoc said, referring to Del Monte, during a break in practice with the rest of the Barons at Puerto de Oro in Cagayan de Oro, the tournament's other venue.

"I think it will, as do the past Interclubs held here, be the turning point in both events," he continued. "The crabbiness of Del Monte will be the key."

Senior play begins on Thursday with Luzon as the defending champion and after that, it will not only be Manotoc who will be a senior player among action for Cauldwing's Men's team but Dino Hernandez as well, in the centerpiece event that gets going Wednesday next week.

Pamela Gamos returns for Luzon, which is also expected to draw the from Iggy Caravello and Philippine Sports Commission chair Richie Garcia.

Not that Pueblo will not provide a stiff challenge, but Manotoc believes that long hitters will be rewarded well there, unlike in Del Monte where long, booming drives don't necessarily translate scores.

"Pueblo de Oro is a long hitter's course that could be rewarding at times. But practically all of the players (in the field) can hit it long," Manotoc said. "But you can't bomb away on all your tee shots at Del Monte."

Del Monte sure can to spoil a multi-straight romp for the Barons in Hiro's play as it aims to register a 2004 feat by replicating its familiarity of Del Monte and put a buffer over the field when they play the easier Pueblo layout.

Azkals would've done Chua proud

IN HUDDLE

Herb Calla

THE PHILIPPINE Azkals have certainly come a long way.

I did some research on them the other day and was surprised to find out that brothers Michael and James Younghusband, as well as some members of the present national team, started playing for the Philippine football squad six years ago in 2005 when the Southeast Asian Games was held here in the Philippines.

Interestingly, Phil Younghusband, who was then only 18 and was a reserve of the Chelsea team in the English Premier League, was "discovered" by ex-Navy youth who saw his name on a computer game.

The kid, who obviously had a passion for football, ruined his discovery in the Philippine Football Federation, headed at the time by Johnny Romualdez, who lost no time in conducting a background check on the Filipino-British.

* * *

The Younghusband brothers did not decide to represent the country that Philippines team when this offer was made.

The Philippines was familiar territory to them, having made frequent trips to their mother's homeland for holiday excursions.

The Younghusbands' parents, Phil Sr., an Englishman and Gemma, a Filipina, met here in Manila almost 30 years ago, but established base in England where the brothers were raised.

Both Younghusbands were reserves of the Chelsea team. The 5-foot-11 Phil, a striker, was expected to play the more important role.

James, 21, stands 6-1 and is a midfielder. The brothers were influenced by their father's love of football. They joined the Chelsea program when they were very young.

The Younghusbands said they had no plans to stay here in the Philippines but were willing to play again in the next SEA Games.

Most of the information I have written above were culled from a couple of articles written by scribe Nelson Beltran in November 2005 shortened Rassilon (UE), reviews of the soccer competitions in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

* * *

"When Phil and James came here, the Philippines had not won a single game in the SEA Games for 10 years," recalled Beltran, who was invited by the late Tony Claro to cover the soccer games in Bacolod.

A former football player, Claro was then vice president of the Philippine Football Federation, although he was better known as PBA governor for George Gruela's Red Bull team.

"The Younghusbands' target, according to Nelson, was to win a medal. It didn't matter what color. "They said any color would do."

"But their wish was not granted, although we broke the 10-year losing streak. We were only one game away from Cambodia (4-1) in the 2005 SEA Games. Hardly anybody wanted to cover the football games at that time, but since Tony Claro was a good friend, I consented to go to Bacolod," Mel continued.

It's sad, he said, that his friend did not live to see the surge to glory of of football fans in the Philippines.

"It was his first love, he really worked hard for that sport," Nelson said.

As if I didn't know, even during the time when he was chair of the PBA in 2007, 2008, Tony would seek sponsorships and donations from PBA clubs for his football team.

It was only his boss and his pal George Chua—then of Red Bull, now of Barako—who would respond.

Like Tony, George was also a former football player. I don't know how long he waited to fill Gruela's former manager.

There "all deals do so past" friendship was actually formed in the football field and extended to the handover.

Tony was still PBA governor for George Chua's Barako Bull when he drowned in the raging floodwaters of typhoon Ondoy on 2009.

But whatever he is, I'm sure he must be very happy for his dreams for the sport he loves have been fulfilled, far beyond his wildest imaginations.

SPORTSWATCH

Pasay 4-cock derby up

THE COCKFIGHT season of 2011 leads us anew on Friday, Feb. 18, at Pasay City Cockpit via the 9-Ad Sentrado 4-Cock Derby.

At least thirty-five breeders from different provinces are set to arrive in the event. Entry fee is pegged at P22,000.

All entries must be submitted from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. tomorrow.

Be sure to be Junior Sentrado 9-Cock Derby on Feb. 25. For details, please call 8404 800, 8331 7100 and 87 888 7382.

WTJ event slates 80 fights

ABOUT 80 encounters are slated for the Ritash Nu March 4 4-Cock Derby tomorrow at WTJ Sports and Amusement Center in Makati City.

Submission of entries is today from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Interested parties may call 8897 8888 and (02) 444 or 8906-30639.

The WTJ 4-Cock derby will also hold the Jolo 110 K Big Event 6-Cock Derby on Feb. 24, Boxing Champ Manny Pacquiao, meanwhile, will host the MPBF 7-Cock Derby on March 26.

Race 1—(Pon. SIQUITO—Eagle's Nemesis/Kevin Angel 2); Prince Ivan (8-8); Dinastia (9); Desperado (7); Sherry Good Man (8)

Race 2—(Pon. SIQUITO—Sal-dianding (3); Crusader (6); Bonz Sentinel/Pepe (1); Mr. Dot (5); Double Pay (2)

Race 3—(Cor/Tri—Gap-ay Army (3); Mr. Integrity (1); Mabing (5); Ang Dog (4)

Race 4—(Pon-sol/Tri—Andoks (1); Dakota Ninja (5); Blitzkrieg (7); Bonz Bonay (2); Dead Ir. Dragon (3)

Race 5—(Pon.

RACING TIPS

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1st/2nd/Tri—Back-yard Baby (7), Bay of Pleasures (2), Gold Aster (1), Dago's Favorite (3), Prime (5)

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Race 3—(Pon-sol/1st/2nd—Bahala na (8), Lovelier Day (5), Go Green (4), Dancing Tight (3), Bumper (6)

Race 4—(Super SIQUITO—Nine Chapter (5), Sweet Julienne (8)

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Bobcats rip Lakers apart

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA—The defending champion Los Angeles Lakers were left embarrassed after their worst loss of the season, a 109-89 thrashing by the Charlotte Bobcats on Monday.

One day after a hard 89-75 defeat to the Orlando Magic, the Lakers fell flat in an effort that left head coach Phil Jackson fuming.

"I just have this to say: we're very disappointed in our performance tonight, we're embarrassed about what we did, and that's it," Jackson told reporters before walking away.

After beginning their current seven-game road trip with four wins, Los Angeles has lost two straight and has dropped eight of their past 10 meetings with the Bobcats (24-31).

Charlotte forward Gerald Wallace recorded 28 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Bobcats to a second-half surge that knocked out the Lakers (38-16).

The Bobcats ended the third quarter with a 74-3 spurt to pull 74-68 close and led by as many as 20 in the fourth.

Kobe Bryant managed 24 points but made just 8 of 20 field goals.

Reuters

BOBCATS forward Gerald Wallace looks for an open man as the Lakers' Kobe Bryant tries to wrestle possession. REUTERS

INTERNATIONAL rally driver Hiroki Maeda (right) is encouraged to share winning prowess with Filipino driver, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines vice president Akihiro Tanaka welcomes the 2011-2012 Baja Rally winner at the airport.

Douthit nears naturalization

MANILA, DOUTHIT is application for naturalization has been formally transmitted to Malacañang by Interior and Justice Secretary.

Secretary Raul Gonzalez Filipinos executive director Nick Faller yesterday said the Bureau of Immigration is a former LA Lakers drafted, naturalization filipino citizenship within 30 days after his application reached his desk.

Agencies

Laylo keeps share of Aeroflot lead

MOSCOW—Filipino Grandmaster Darwin Laylo drew with Armenian GM Tigran Petrosyan and kept a share of the lead after the seventh round of the 2011 Aeroflot Open chess championships at the Hotel Gostinica Delta on Monday.

The draw was enough to keep Laylo in the clinch of the fight for the Group B title and the 140,000 euro prize with 5.5 points on four wins and three draws to the 186-player event.

The 30-year-old Laylo is tied for the lead with Bangalan, GM Dmitry Jakovenko of Russia, GM Pete Sting of China and GM Nikolai Kobanov and GM Vladimir Belous of Russia.

International Master Richard Bitoon was the lone Filipino winner for the day beating IM Vladislav Arutunov of Russia to raise his score to 4.0 points.

Grandmaster Jayson GM John Dred Gomez is tied for 11th to 25th places with 4.5 points.

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Nissan Welcomes Year of the Rabbit with an exclusive "Prolific" Promo

In celebration of the Chinese New Year, Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. (NMPI) ushered in prosperity and good fortune in the Year of the Metal Rabbit with its "Prolific" promo packages, where customers can avail of as much as 12 monthly payments for free when they purchase selected Nissan models, nevertheless offered in the market.

The promo, which will run until February 28, also offers a selection of attractive financing packages that include low down payment, low monthly amortization and zero percent interest terms.

"Based on the metal rabbit's characteristics, 2011 is expected to be a moderate year with an easygoing pace. As such, we at Nissan aim to provide Filipinos with fun-to-drive in a relaxed and more affordable payment scheme," said Dennis Reister, Marketing and Sales Group Head.

Customers who will choose to avail the REDUCED PAYMENT PERIOD can get as to 12 months free out of the regular 60-month term, with 50 percent down payment. For the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite, pay only for 48 months and save as much as P59,442. Get six months free monthly payments also for the Sentra 200 2.0 MT and save P72,138; X-TRAIL 2.5 AT 4x2 and save P73,160; and X-TRAIL CVT 2.5 4x2 and save P83,022. Meanwhile, purchasing Sentra 1.8 MT/200 and Sentra 1.3 MT GX DTD comes with free 12 monthly payments, which translates to P100,320 and P84,516 savings, respectively.

LOW DOWN offers low down payments of P90,000 for the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite; P118,000 for the Sentra200 2.0 MT and P160,000 for the X-TRAIL 2.5 AT 4x2. What's more, the LOW DOWN offer comes with an all-in package, entitling customers to free one-year comprehensive insurance, free three-year LTO registration, and free chattel mortgage fee.

Practical and budget-conscious buyers will surely be enticed with the LOW MONTHLY term, which lets the customers experience the benefits of a light monthly plan for as low as P7,300 for the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite; P9,800 for the Sentra200 2.0 MT and P10,000 for the X-TRAIL 2.5 AT 4x2 - all for up to 60 months with 50% down payment.

To maximize sales for money, customers can also enjoy 0% INTEREST for up to 36 months with 50 percent down payment for the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite, Sentra200 2.0 MT and X-TRAIL 2.0 AT 4x2.

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Villarde

Hunt on for suspect in massacre

By Nitz Cenia

THE POLICE continued their search yesterday for the gunman suspect in the killing of four members of a family in Cainta, Rizal.

Cainta Mayor Meo Ragos the other day offered a P100,000 reward for any information that would lead to the arrest of Fernando "Jun-

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5-year-old killed in QC fire

5-hour blaze also leaves 6 hurt, 2,000 families homeless

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A 5-YEAR-OLD BOY died while at least 2,000 families lost their homes in a fire that hit a densely populated area near Congressional Avenue in Barangay Bahay Toro, Quezon City.

Senior Supt. Bobbie Rumolo, the city fire marshal, said six people were also injured in the blaze that broke out at 9:20 p.m. on Monday before it was placed under control at 2:37 a.m. yesterday.

Previous fires recovered the charred body of Manny Martinez, 5, from one of the 500 houses destroyed by the fire.

Arson investigator PO2 Jose Gozon said the boy was left behind by his mother and siblings in their rush to get out of their burning house.

"The mother thought that one of her children had gotten the boy out," he added.

Gozon identified the six people who sustained injuries as Clara Dequina, 40; Joy as Sevilla, 22; Senior Concepcion, 50; Micaela Arenga, 48; Florencio Arenga, 42; and Alpha Perfecarion, 6.

They sustained either minor burns, cuts or bruises as they were fleeing from their burning houses.

According to Gozon, the fire spread quickly because most of the houses in the area were built of light materials.

Based on an initial investigation, the fire may have started in the home of Cadito Mabini at 98 Sinagtala St., he added.

According to other residents, they spotted flames coming from the second floor of Mabini's home before the blaze broke out.

Gozon said the cause of the fire was still under investigation.

The damage to property was placed at around P10 million. Rumolo told the Inquirer.

Yesterday's fire was the second fire to hit a densely populated area in Quezon City since last week.

On Feb. 7, a fire which raged for nearly eight hours destroyed the homes of 3,000 families and left 11 people injured.

METROBRIEFS

18 hurt in mishap

TEN PEOPLE were injured after a fuel tanker hit a passenger jeepney on Monday night in Pasay City. Police said the victims were on an Alabang-bound jeepney (DNY 606) being driven by Rodolfo Gamaco when it was rear-ended by the fuel tanker. The jeepney was making an South Luzon Expressway when it slowed down after the vehicles in front of it stopped, giving the tanker's driver, Joseph Ramirez, not enough time to stop, said the police. The victims were rushed to Ospital ng Makati, Asian Hospital and Pasay City General Hospital. The tanker's driver is facing charges for reckless imprudence resulting to multiple physical injuries and damage to property, the police said. **Tarra C. Quismo**

Man kills self on V-Day

A MAN who became depressed after he failed to find his family on Valentine's Day hanged himself to his house in Barangay Bukay, Caloocan City, Records of the Caloocan City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said that Jayson Briones, a 19-year-old vendor was found dead at around 5 p.m. on Feb. 14. PO3 Modesto Jr. Asencion said the body was discovered by a neighbor. Briones' wife told police that she and her children left their house at around 11 a.m. after she and Briones had a fight. She said that she had asked him to take her and the kids out that day but he insisted on staying because he didn't have money. "She said she never thought the troubled would drive him to commit suicide," the investigator said. **Nancy C. Carvajal**

Contractor sued

DILG CLUSTER City government file after day fiber changes against the developer and contractor of subdivision under construction at the Don Santos complex on Sitio Lawaan, portion of the structure gave way last week. Sue has page affidavit, Don Properties and its contractor, Doubleday Construction, were charged with violating a provision of the National Building Code. The Department of the Building Official filed the complaint with the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office following the incident on Friday at the Don Santos Compound 2 where is undergoing construction. A portion of the wall and floor, measuring some 60 square meters, gave way after a steel beam holding up a ramp gave way while cement was being poured. No one was hurt. The city government, in its complaint, said the developer and the contractor had no excavation permit and building permit for the ongoing project. **Julie M. Aurelio**

Teenager takes life

A TEENAGER hanged herself yesterday morning because he reportedly restricted having been abandoned by his parents. Rizza Agravior, 16, of Andres Street in Malate, was declared dead on arrival by doctors at Ospital ng Maynila after her hanged herself with a television cord inside the room he shared with his 11-year-old sister. SPO2 David Tuzon of the Manila Police District homicide section said the victim's sister told the police that before he killed himself, he had expressed anger at their mother who recently left them. She added that they have had no contact with their father for a long time. **Jaymalin C. Andrade**

2,000 couples wed

SOME 2,000 couples gathered in Caloocan City on Valentine's Day in an attempt to break a record set by India for the biggest mass wedding. Mandaluyong Rep. Neptali Gonzales II said he was filled to capacity with couples dressed in their best for the newly weds organized by the city government for couples who do not have enough resources to tie the knot. Marriage contracts signed by newly-weds require no token fee. For the couple's participants, the fee was waived while the cost for the presentation of documents at the civil registry was shouldered by the local government. **Aritao Felina Mangaoang**

Concert, fun run set

ITS adventure guitar extraordinaire project organized by students of the Mapúa that tackled the four examinations held at Dr. La Salle University on 26th Avenue on Sept. 26 last year. Ms. Ibes, than Mayor Alfonso Lim pitched in a donation, and ordered his staff to help the students. Rabbi Lazard, Jeremy Lozada and Patricia Salangsang are expected to their fundraising project during on Feb. 19 and 20 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The event, dubbed "Run for Tat," will feature a concert on the first day and a fun run on the second. **Jayson T. David**

Hunt ... From page A01

past" Author Jr., 24 (not Author as previously reported by the police).

Jaujan is a nephew of Amado Author, one of the victims.

Meanwhile, Senior Supt. Manuel Parayno, chief police chief, told the Inquirer that he learned that Author had been arrested in Mandaluyan province.

The information, he said, came from the provincial police. The main description, however, did not match the one they had so there and they sent a police team and some of the victims' relatives to identify the suspect being held in Mandaluyan.

On Monday morning, Senador, 65, his wife, Elizabeth, 40, and their children Prencher, 10, and Amando Jr., 11, were found dead inside their house on Alley 86, Lalaan Tres, Barangay San Isidro. They had been stabbed several times.

The neighbor, Jaujan, 20, reportedly heard screams and cries for help coming from the Author house. However, no one came to their aid because they thought it was just an ordinary family dispute.

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SCN-00121 — MBP : P25,650,000

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SP-020 — MBP : P42,000,000

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MIXED-USE PROPERTIES

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SLN-021 — MBP : 8,100,000

SBN-016 — MBP : 5,600,000

SB-049 — MBP : P23,760,000

SB-041 — MBP : P28,170,000

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SP-006A — MBP : P15,600,000

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SMN-0150/15 — MBP : 14,000,000

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COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

SU-285 — MBP : 28,600,000

SU-294 — MBP : 42,190,000

INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

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MIXED-USE PROPERTY

SU-430 — MBP : 8,800,000

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SU-316 — MBP : 90,380,000

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2. 20% more below the MBP for Sale Mode, to be submitted by the Winning Bidder in a Manager's Check payable to the Selling Entity on the Bidding Date.
3. Balance to be Bank/Installment Financed – shall be paid not later than April 30, 2011.

PROPERTIES WITH UNDISCLOSED TITLES

1. Sale Mode – 10% of the contract to be paid to accreditation by the auction participant on the bidding date(s) on auction day, February 25, 2011. Upon bidding and acceptance of the bid, the bidder shall execute a Contract to Sell with Starproperties Development Corporation, Inc. (SDC).
2. 20% of the Winning Bid Price less the Down Money, to be submitted by the Winning Bidder in a Manager's Check payable to the Selling Entity on the Bidding Date (March 25, 2011).
3. Balance to be Bank/Installment Financed – shall be paid not later than April 30, 2011.
4. Balance – 70% of the Winning Bid Price payable within seven (7) calendar days from presentation of OR of the lawful title to the Selling Entity.

PROPERTY RELATED EXPENSES: All applicable property related transfer taxes and fees, unless otherwise mentioned and discussed in the Sale Mode, shall be for the account of the Buyer.

CONTACT NOS.

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JENNY - 02-631-7333 / 02-571-6838 / 0917-8985215
KEN - 02-631-7333 / 02-571-6842 / 0917-8985192
MICHELE - 02-631-7333 / 0908-8284838
LENNIE - 02-631-7333 / 02-571-6833 / 0917-8985207
ANDING - 02-631-7333 / 02-571-6834 / 0917-8985202
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WORLD BRIEFS

Obama's $3.7-trillion budget highlights divide

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama sent Congress a $3.73 trillion budget proposal that highlights the partisan divide bound to shape next year's presidential race. Administration officials say the 2012 spending plan submitted on Monday would cut the soaring US deficit over the long haul, while avoiding a direct hit to Obama's core spending on clean energy, education and high-speed rail. But Republicans, who took control of the House of Representatives last month in part because of voter anger over soaring deficits, said Obama's plan represented a feeble attempt to cut the government's debt. They were ready to start pushing through their own package of deep cuts in domestic spending through the House of Representatives. AP

Berlusconi spares resignation calls

ROME—Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi on Monday said he had no intention of stepping down and dismissed a weekend demonstration by women across Italy over his involvement in a sex scandal. Hundreds of thousands of women took part in rallies on Sunday to defend their dignity and protest over the underage prostitution scandal that has rocked the 74-year-old prime minister's center-right government. Berlusconi has dismissed the investigations against him as "disgusting and disgraceful," but he has come under pressure from groups including the Vatican and Italy's main business lobby. Confindustria, and polls show his image has suffered. Reuters

Nasa spacecraft woos comet on Valentine's Day

PASADENA—A Nasa spacecraft flew by a comet half the size of Manhattan for a nighttime rendezvous on Valentine's Day. Speeding at 38,880 kph, the Stardust craft came within 180 km of the surface of comet Tempel 1 on Monday. Scientists and engineers clapped when they received a signal from Stardust confirming that it had snapped a lot dozen pictures as planned. The intensive flyby, which occurred 208 million km from Earth, is the first time that a comet has been visited up close by two different spacecraft. AP

Malaysia lowers oaths in anti-Valentine's drive

KUALA LUMPUR—Islamic morality police in Malaysia have detained 40 unmarried Muslim couples in hotel rooms during Operation Valentine, aimed at curbing illegal premarital sex, Mohamad Nizar Jaafar, with the Islamic Department of the central Malaysian state of Selangor, said scores of officers visited budget hotels on Monday evening, detaining unmarried Muslim couples who were sharing rooms. AP

Butterflies make partial comeback in Mexico

MEXICO CITY—The number of monarch butterflies migrating from Canada and the United States to Mexico has increased this year, a hopeful sign following a worrying 7%-percent drop in their numbers last year, experts reported on Monday. The total amount of forest covered by the colonies—millions of orange-and-black butterflies that hang in clumps from the boughs of fir trees—more than doubled from last year's historic low. But concerns persist about the monarchs' long-term survival, because their numbers remain well below average. AP

Colombia nabs fully submersible drug submarine

BOGOTA—Colombian soldiers have for the first time seized a fully submersible drug-smuggling submarine capable of reaching the coast of Mexico, authorities announced on Monday. Previous drug-carrying submarines found in Colombia were only semi-submersible, meaning part of the structure always remained above the surface. But the sub discovered on Sunday can operate completely underwater, said Col. Manuel Bonilla, chief of staff of Colombia's Pacific Command. AP

McDonald's serves up McWeddings

HONG KONG—In the buzzing financial hub known for its fast living, young Hongkongers couples can now grab love on the run at the city's Mc Donald's outlets, which are offering a burgeoning new addition: "McWeddings." On Valentine's Day at a downtown Mc Donald's closest to the financial district, the fast food joint was decked out with pink balloons, a "cake" stacked from apple pies, as well as super-sized sweetie-crusted M rings, for a surprise engagement bash thrown by Kelvin, a young model, for his girlfriend, Ashley. Reuters

China's carrier killer missile won't stop US, says admiral

WASHINGTON, JAPAN—A new "carrier killer" missile that has become a symbol of China's rising military might will not deter the US Navy from sailing its carrier operations in the Pacific, a senior Navy commander told The Associated Press.

Defense analysts say the Dong Feng 21D missile could upend the balance of power in Asia, where US aircraft carrier battle groups have ruled the waves since the end of World War II.

But Vice Adm. Scott Van Buskirk, commander of the US 7th Fleet, said in an interview that the Navy did not see the much-feared weapon as creating any unsurmountable vulnerability for US carriers—the Navy's crown jewels.

"It's not the sinkless kind of our aircraft carriers or our Navy—it is a one-weapon system, one technology that is out there," Van Buskirk said in an interview aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS George Washington, the only current that a homeported in the western Pacific.

The DF-21D is unique in that it is believed capable of hitting a powerfully defended moving target—like the USS George Washington—with pinpoint precision. That objective is an complex that the Soviets gave up on a similar project.

The missile would penetrate defenses because its speed from launch to impact would not allow enough time for carriers or other large ships to complete countermeasures.

That would seriously weaken Washington's ability to intervene in any potential conflict over Taiwan or North Korea, as well as deny US ships safe access to international waters near China's 14,000-kilometre coastline.

Van Buskirk, whose fleet is responsible for most of the Pacific and Indian oceans, with 50-70 ships and 40,000 sailors and Marines under his command, said the capabilities of the Chinese missile were as yet unproven.

But he acknowledged the missile raised special concerns.

"Any new capability is something that we try to monitor," he said.

"If there wasn't this to point to as a game changer, there would be something else," he said. "That term has been bandied about for many things. I think it really depends on how you define the game, whether it really changes it or not. It's a very specific armament for a very specific capability—so those things can be very impactful."

CHINA shows its Dong Feng 21 D missile during a military parade at Tiananmen Square on Oct. 1 last year.

The development of the missile comes as China is increasingly venturing further out to sea and is becoming more assertive about its territorial and its disputes over territory.

The latest than expected development of the missile also has set off alarm bells in Washington. Further, China is developing a stealth fighter jet that may be used to support the Navy in its potential conflict and hopes to deploy its first aircraft carriers over the next decade.

Late last year, China and Japan were locked in a heated diplomatic row over several islands both claim in the East China Sea, an area rich in reserves reported by US Navy sources. A flurry of 30 Chinese warships, including advanced submarines and destroyers, passed through the Miyako Strait last April in the biggest transit of its kind to date.

Besides, simply put, there's not a security role to its capital.

Still, Van Buskirk said the Navy had no intention of altering its mission because of the new threat and would continue to operate in the area around Japan, Korea, the Philippines and elsewhere when it deemed necessary. AP

EPIC ENVIRONMENT CASE

Chevron fined $9.5 billion in Ecuador

QUITO, ECUADOR—An Ecuadorean judge ruled on Monday in an epic environmental case that Chevron Corp. was responsible for oil-drilling contamination in a wide swath of Ecuador's northern jungle and ordered the oil giant to pay $9.5 billion in damages and cleanup costs.

The amount—$8.6 billion plus a legally mandated 10-percent repatriation fee—was far below the $27.3 billion award various awarded by a court appointed expert but appeared to be the highest damage award ever issued to an environment of interest.

But whether the plaintiffs—including indigenous groups who say their hunting and fishing grounds in Amazon River headwaters were decimated by toxic wastewater that also raised the cancer rate—can collect remains to be seen.

In a statement, Chevron called the decision "illegitimate and unenforceable" and said it would appeal. The oil giant has long contended it could never get a fair trial in Ecuador and has retained all assets from the politically volatile Andean country, whose leftist president, Rafael Correa, had waived support for the plaintiffs.

Chevron, which earned $19.2 billion last year, said it did not believe the judgment "enforceable in any court that does not the rule of law."

Company spokesperson Kent Robertson said "the evidence of fraud on the part of the plaintiffs' lawyers is overwhelming."

"We intend to see that the perpetrators of this fraud are held accountable for their misconduct," he added in a e-mail exchange.

The marathon, high-stakes case, fraught with corporate espionage and geopolitical intrigue, has been winding its way through US and Ecuadorean courts for more than 17 years but has in recent years turned into an unusually unidimensional legal slugfest.

Ecuadorean lawyers have accused Chevron successfully having documentary filmmaker Joe Berlinger to surrender outtake from his documentary "Crude" about the dispute, a decision upheld by a US appeals court. Those outtakes were used in an attempt to show that a plaintiffs' attorney, Steven Donziger, had bought and allegedly unethically influenced Ecuadorean justice.

The plaintiffs' lead lawyer, Pablo Fajardo, called the 187-page judgment "a great way that we have made toward the crystallization of justice," but he added that "we are not completely satisfied" with the court-specified damages award. AP

Longest kiss in history

PATTAYA, Thailand—It was one long kiss for a couple—one record-breaking embrace for the ages.

A determined Thai couple locked lips for 46 hours, 24 minutes and nine seconds to celebrate Valentine's Day on the southern beach resort town, surpassing previous effort a "Hawaiian" organizers claim marked the longest recorded smooch in history.

The previous record of just over 32 hours was set in 2009 by a couple in Germany, according to Guinness World Records, whose officials will have to verify the latest submission.

Baytown couples locked off the cuts at 6 a.m. on Sunday.

The winner was announced before dawn on Tuesday a Bangkok couple, Sikarchai and Lalisa Haruetai. They were each awarded prizes worth $1,000, and a $3,213 cash prize. AP

WANTED: A New Central Bank Governor

AN OPEN APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT

His Excellency
BENIGNO SIMEON C. AQUINO III
President of the Philippines
Malacañang Palace, Manila

Dear President Aquino:

We earnestly support your leadership and commitment against corruption, misconduct and other inadequacies in government that have been the principal hindrance to our national advancement and growth. For this reason, we raise the following specific concerns on why Governor Amando M. Tetangco, Jr. should **NOT** be reappointed as head of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas:

1. There are about 4 graft complaints pending against Governor Tetangco for gross violation of the New Central Bank Act and other pertinent laws enforced by the BSP that have been injurious to the banking system and to the overall economy. Verification with the Ombudsman will readily reveal the importance of these cases that must be acted with dispatch to prevent further harm to the paramount public interest. However, the grant of a second term to Governor Tetangco before these cases are resolved is tantamount to turning a deaf ear to desperate appeals for judiciousness, fairness and impartiality in BSP's exercise of regulatory powers and discretionary functions. It will downplay if not absolve him prematurely of serious criminal charges.

2. Under the watch of Governor Tetangco, he approved BSP financial statements to reflect a lower net income and reduce tax payments by providing unauthorized reserves, such as officers' liability fund and other non-permissible items that were deducted in the calculation of its net profit. Under the law, the BSP is allowed to make reserves only for bad and doubtful accounts. The BIR will confirm these enormous taxes due, which the BSP has not paid through such irregular practice. Furthermore, the New Central Bank Act requires the BSP to annually remit 75% of its net profits by way of regular dividends to the Treasury because the National Government absorbed more than PhP 300 billion of the debts and accountabilities of the old Central Bank. By lowering its net income through questionable methods, the BSP effectively deprives government of its fair share in revenues essential to the economic sustenance and operation of the nation. How can a leading department of Government resort to such practice and expect entities under its supervision to be honest in complying with banking laws and rules, which the BSP itself violates with impunity?

3. Under the watch of Governor Tetangco, he has been charged by the **ADVOCATES FOR TRUTH IN LENDING** before the Ombudsman for causing widespread and undue injury to private-sector borrowers through manifest partiality, evident bad faith and gross inexcusable negligence in not complying with the BSP Implementing Rules and Regulations with respect to R.A 3765, otherwise known as the Truth in Lending Act. It is alleged in the Complaint that Governor Tetangco and BSP General Counsel Juan De Zuñiga refused to enforce the statutory simple annual rate for any and all lending contracts, including all credit card transactions as mandatorily provided under Section 2(i) of CB Circular 158. Instead, they conspired to ignore the commercial banks' computation and billing malpractices that clearly violate said Circular, effectively consenting to the compound, monthly or quarterly nominal rates of interest, and thereby defrauding their clients of at least PhP29.5 billion per year, PhP2.5 billion per month or PhP125 million per working day in illegal interests and other financing charges. This iniquitous overcharging of interest through deceptive billing miscomputations has victimized borrowers even more because the incumbent chief regulator of credit and money matters has chosen to disregard these fraudulent malpractices which are punishable by law. Proving these allegations will belie BSP's vague claims that it has effectively managed inflation. Furthermore, in the absence of proper disclosures informing unwary borrowers of what they are getting into, the Supreme Court has consistently ruled the imposition of these unjust interest charges to be null and void, and in those cases ordered the reversion of the applicable interest rate to the legal rate, which is a flat "simple" rate of 12% per anum.

4. Under the watch of Governor Tetangco, the BSP has performed its responsibilities with obvious bias for select big banks, but with oppression and glaring prejudice for smaller banks deserving of regulatory relief and assistance, which the BSP either refused to extend adequate assistance to or altogether denied such assistance or relief which could have prevented such banks from being in distress or from closing. On the other hand, the BSP extended unwarranted income support schemes in billions of pesos and gratuitous dole-outs to favored banks, thereby allowing them unrivaled advantages and unjustified profits, but neglected desperate pleas from thrift banks for needed assistance as victims of grave abuses by the regulator or because of difficulties occasioned by adverse economic conditions beyond their control.

5. Under the watch of Governor Tetangco, the BSP has been remiss in conducting regular and thorough examination of certain companies under its supervision, enabling them, like rural banks and other non-financial intermediaries under the **LEGACY GROUP**, to pursue deceitful and illegal activities to such outrageous proportions until much irreversible damage has been done to their customers and clients.

6. Under the watch of Governor Tetangco, privileged private individuals have been permitted to open trust accounts with banks under Special Deposit Accounts placed with the BSP, yielding interests higher than regular bank deposits. This facility is a grave misuse of the BSP's designation as banker of the government as distinguished from the private sector. Moreover, it undermines the attractiveness and demand for government securities which the BSP has the responsibility of supporting to stabilize its value and in order to promote private investments in vital government obligations.

7. Under the watch of Governor Tetangco, Government incurred through mismanagement of foreign exchange transactions massive losses in defending the swings of the peso against the weakening dollar. By propping up the value of the U.S. currency to prevent the sharp rise of the peso from increased dollar remittances, the BSP lost billions in the first 6 months of 2010, in the year 2008 and 2008 and a staggering higher amount in billions of losses in 2007. This deprived our already exploited OFWs and their families the benefits of an improved purchasing power of the peso. Such hefty amounts could have been used to reduce our foreign debt, or for vital infrastructure projects that would encourage investment flows, create jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities and cultivate domestic demand for local commodities. Interventionist policies only work as palliative remedies in stabilizing currency values in a vibrant and robust economy, but are ineffective under a precarious and fragile economic environment like the Philippines. In fact, these kinds of foreign exchange losses were instrumental in getting the predecessor of the BSP insolvent. Notwithstanding the express provision in Section 45 of the New Central Bank Act that the revaluation of net assets and losses in gold or foreign currencies cannot be included in the computation of its annual profits and losses, the BSP has propounded the grossly misleading argument that it is entitled to provide reserves for foreign exchange fluctuations and thereby reduce in billions of pesos its net profits, resulting in the further depletion of its dividend obligations to the Government, also in billions of pesos.

The alleged "abilities" of Governor Tetangco are not crucial in achieving stability and continuity in our monetary system. On the contrary, he has failed to deal with the most basic and alarming root of our nation's instability – the widening gap between the rich and poor. We need a transformative BSP leadership who will help liberate the country from the economic stagnation that has intolerably held our people captive of poverty for too long.

These are only some of the critical issues against Governor Tetangco, which by themselves provide the compelling reason why he should NOT be extended a second term. We are confident that other convincing basis will come to light before the expiration of his term in July, and it is hoped that your Excellency will reconsider your decision in this regard. Indeed there are better choices for Governor of the BSP who will be prepared to tread the "matuwid na landas" that the President righteously seeks.

Respectfully yours,

TEOFISTO T. GUINGONA
Former Vice President
Republic of the Philippines

HARRY H. ROQUE
U.P. Professor of Law
Human Rights Lawyer

EDUARDO R. OLAGUER
President, Advocates for
Truth in Lending

DR. OSCAR S. SUAREZ
Former President
Philippine Christian University

BISHOP REUEL O. MARIGZA
UCCP General Secretary

BISHOP JESSE S. SUAREZ
Chief of Staff
UCCP National Secretariat

Anyone who has pending charges before the Ombudsman should refrain, on his own behalf first before getting an appointment to any government office especially that in the BSP, to resign from his position.

AQUILINO "NENE" Q. PIMENTEL, JR.
Former Senator
Republic of the Philippines

COL. ARIEL O. QUIRUBIN
Ret. Marine Colonel
Medal for Valor Awardee

PERFECTO R. YASAY, JR.
Former SEC Chairman

The WORLD

Lita Lorente B. Sueco

Violent protests erupt in Middle East

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—The possible heirs of Egypt's aprising took to the streets in different corners of the Middle East: Iran's beleaguered opposition warned back to central Tehran and came under a tear gas attack by police. Demonstrators faced rubber bullets and 'live' shot to demand more freedoms in the relative wealth of Bahrain. And protesters pressed for the ouster of the ruler in power in divided Yemen.

Monday's protests—all with critical resonance Washington—offer an important lesson about how groups across Middle East are absorbing the message from Cairo and tailoring it to their own aspirations.

The heady themes of democracy, justice and empowerment remain intact as the protest wave works its way through the Arab world and beyond. What changes, however, are the objectives. The Egypt effect, it seems, is three-

"This isn't a one-size-fits-all thing," said Mustafa Alani, a regional analyst at the Gulf Research Center in Dubai. "Each place will interpret the fallout from Egypt in their own way and in their own context."

Iran opposition

For the Iranian opposition—not even on the streets in more than a year—it has become a moment to reassert its presence after facing relentless pressures.

Tens of thousands of protesters chanted with yesterday's news along some of Tehran's main boulevards, which were threaded in clouds of tear gas in scenes that recalled the chaos after the disputed reelection of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in June 2009. A pro-government news agency reported one Iranian was killed by a gunshot.

"Death to the dictator," many yelled in reference to Ahmadinejad. Others took aim at Iran's all-powerful Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei with chants linking him with toppled rulers Hosni Mubarak in Egypt and Tunisia's Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali.

US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton expressed support for the Iranian protesters, saying they "deserve to have the same rights that they saw being played out in Egypt and are part of their own birthright."

Yemen, Bahrain

In Yemen, the protests are about spending the ouster of the US-allied president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has promised to vacate step down in 2013.

More than 1,000 people, including lawyers in their black ceremonial robes, joined a fourth consecutive day of protests in the capital of Yemen—a day after police attacked antigovernment marchers with sticks and daggers. Human Rights Watch said police on Sunday also used tear gas and batons to disperse protesters.

"We will continue our protests until the regime falls," independent lawmaker Ahmed Sokhel said.

Monday's protests mirrored the calls in Egypt and Tunisia against the leaders there who had been in power for decades. "The people want the regime to step down."

Protesters in the tiny Gulf nation of Bahrain are not looking to topple its monarchy. But their demands are no less

IN HONOR'S protest, Yemeni demonstrators press the ouster of the US-allied president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has promised to step down in 2013. AP

lofty—greater political freedom and sweeping changes in how the country is run.

Even so, protests in Bahrain were more violent. Security forces fired tear gas, rubber bullets and bird-shot pellets at thousands of antigovernment protesters heeding calls to unite in a major rally and bring the Arab town to the Gulf for the first time. At least 25 people were injured, and one standard after suffering severe head trauma.

Police have used tear and other vehicles to block main roads into the capital of Manama to prevent a mass gathering that organizers intended as an homage to Egypt's Tahrir Square.

More demos planned

The most possible round of democracy protests is in the Arab.

A coalition in Algeria—human rights activists, unionists, lawyers and others—has called protests on Saturday to push for the end of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's 12-year rule.

Kuwait's highly organized opposition, including parliament members, plans gatherings on March 8 to demand a wholesale change of cabinet officials, but not the ruling emir.

"We are experiencing a pan-Arab democratic moment of sorts," said Khalil Ismail, director of research at The Brookings Doha Center in Qatar. "For opposition groups, it comes down to the question of, 'If not now, when?'"

But he noted that the newfound Arab confidence for change would go in various directions.

"The Arab opposition are using the Egyptian model as a message that anything is possible," Ismail said. "They interpret that into their local context." AP

Simon
Prevent the crime before it happens

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Connie S. Marlowe

BUSINESS

BIZ BUZZ

■ **Young billionaires** /B3

Overseas Filipinos sent $18.8B in '10

Highest level of remittances ever recorded

By Ma.Stella V. Bautista

REMITTANCES GREW faster than expected in 2010 to post an all-time high as the recovery of the global economy from the recent turmoil led to growth in job opportunities abroad for Filipinos.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that remittances from Filipinos based overseas reached $18.76 billion last year, the highest ever recorded in the country.

It was an 8.2-percent growth from the $17.07 billion registered in 2009 and exceeded the government's forecast of 6 percent.

In December alone, remittances accounted to $1.69 billion, rising 8.1 percent from $1.57 billion in the same month of the previous year.

The BSP said the robust growth in remittances, which fuel local consumption, partly shield the economy's sharp rebound last year from the slowdown in 2009.

"The double-digit remittances continued to provide strong support to domestic demand, with the remittances level for the year accounting for close to 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a statement.

GDP grew 7.3 percent in 2010, the fastest pace in about three decades.

Remittances largely came from Filipinos based in the United States, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Italy, Germany and Norway.

The increasing number of job markets as well as the expanding network of remittance centers serving Filipino workers should be credited for boosting the amount of money sent by Filipinos to their families and other relatives in the Philippines.

"The continuing innovations of financial products and services (such as web-based remittance services and cash cards) being offered in the market to facilitate money transfer have likewise contributed to the resilience of remittances throughout the year," Tetangco said.

The BSP said that as of end-2010, there were 4,383 remittance centers, banks and other offices all over the world paying the remittances inside of Filipinos. This was up from 3,736 registered as of end-2009.

Citing documents from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), the central bank further reported that 46,228 job orders for Filipino workers by foreign employers were processed and approved last year. There are an estimated 10 million Filipino workers abroad.

While the growth in remittances has a positive impact on the economy in the form of increased consumption by recipients, it reflected the view of many Filipinos that job opportunities in the country were lacking.

The National Statistician Office earlier reported that the unemployment rate in the country stood at 7.1 percent in October 2010, just the same as that in the same period of the previous year.

Treasury eyes sale of ₱30B worth of retail bonds in March

By Ma.Stella V. Bautista

THE BUREAU of the Treasury is considering to raise at least ₱30 billion from the sale of retail treasury bonds (RTBs) in March.

Rizal-based Treasurer Roberto Tan said state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines have proposed to act as arrangers of the RTB sale and have suggested that the government raise ₱50 billion or more from the bond-issuing activity, taking into account consumers' market demand.

"We have no definite plan yet, but we are considering their proposal," Tan told reporters yesterday.

Tan said the schedule for the proposed RTB sale was also not final, although Land Bank and BDP have proposed to do the activity sometime in March, when previously issued RTBs will mature.

There are P80 billion worth of RTBs maturing next month, but the government was affluent to sell a smaller amount of newly issued RTBs as it still has existing liquidity to cover the maturing obligations, treasury officials said.

TRANSLATE TO:

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Feb. 15, 2011
43.720

STOCK MARKET
Feb. 15, 2011
5.95

Stocks down slightly

LOCAL EQUITIES fell mildly in their trading yesterday as the run-up during the last few days tempted profit-taking activities as the index neared 5,000.

The main index Philippine Stock Exchange index fell 5.95 points or 0.107 percent to close at 5,590.18.

Trading was mixed for the day but the decline of the property, services and holding firm sectors dragged the index lower. The services counter was the most battered, falling 1.1 percent for the day.

Volume turnover was light at ₱5.6 billion as most of foreign investor support. There was ₱174 million in net foreign selling yesterday.

There were 91 advancers that were edged out by 73 decliners, while 39 stocks were unchanged.

"The market is in a see-saw motion where no alternative investment is available. Interest rates are low so players are either stuck or holding on to cash and too hard to go back into the [equities] market because foreign investors are still selling," said PNB Securities deputy head Manuel Lozano.

"Index stocks took the day out as some consolidation but it is too early to tell," he added.

The market was weighed down by the selldown of PLDT, Ayala Land (ALI), Ayala Corp., Universal Robina, Semirara Mining, Metrobank, SM Prime and PNB.

On the other hand, the overall decline was tempered by gains shot out by SM Investments, Manpower, Atlantic Equity Investments, Atlantic Power, Cebu Air, Alliance Global, First Holdings, ICT-10, JollibeeFood San Miguel Corp.

Although the bourse fared lower in all fronts, investors took much incentive in accumulate stocks especially as inflation concerns across Asia are causing a shift in global funds from emerging to developed markets. **Elena C. Sandoz**

IN THIS ISSUE

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Bourse draws up new rules on securities borrowing, lending

PSE expects boost in trading liquidity

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK Exchange has drafted a new set of rules to govern securities borrowing and lending (SBL), a scheme to spur capital market activity in other markets that helps boost trading liquidity.

SBL refers to the lending of stocks from an investor's portfolio to a borrower who needs the stocks for settlement obligations or to support trading strategies. It involves the physical transfer of shares to the borrower while the lender still retains certain rights according to the shares of stocks kept. In other markets, it helps improve stock and bond market liquidity through the creation of more sophisticated trading strategies and introduction of derivative instruments.

A draft framework recently approved by the PSE board for public comment prescribes the documentary requirements for SBL transactions. Public inputs are welcome until March 16 this year.

Prior to engaging in such transactions, the framework requires the **beneficial owners** and the **lending agent** to execute a securities-lending **authorization agreement** (SLAA), a written contract by which the beneficial owner authorizes the lending agent to offer his securities for lending under the terms agreed between them. No such SLAA will be required if the transaction involves securities held in the lender's account.

The SLAA must define the lender's (the owner's) right to cash and stock dividends, stock splits and other corporate actions as well as the specified rate or income from the transaction.

A central lending agent will not be required to execute the SLAA with either the lending agents that have contributed to the lending pool or the clients of such lending agents. The central lending agent may instead require the lending agents to enter into memberships agreements or other pacts deemed necessary.

Prior to the SBL transaction, the parties will also execute a master securities lending agreement (MSLA) or a written contract that defines and specifies the general terms and conditions of the arrangement.

The parties must submit the MSLA to the Bureau of Internal Revenue for registration in order to avail themselves of the tax benefits granted under the SBL revenue regulations.

The framework also states the responsibilities of parties to the SBL transactions. "The **trading participant** shall ensure that it, and the persons it employs or appoints to conduct business for or on behalf of it in respect of SBL transactions, is trained in the practices of SBL transactions and is familiar with these rules, relevant laws and regulations," the draft stated.

"Furthermore, the trading participant shall advise its SBL clients to the extent that such will cause legal title over the securities to be transferred to the borrower, and shall inform them of the consequences of said transfer, particularly on voting rights and dividends, and the options available to the lender to retain such voting rights," it added.

With regards to collateral management, the borrower is required to provide and deliver to the lender—prior or simultaneous with the delivery to the borrower of the borrowed securities—the collateral in such amount or value as provided in the Securities and Exchange Commission circular on SBL.

The lender may recall the securities upon notice to the borrower after the latter has three trading days from such notice within which to return the securities. The borrower may at any time return the borrowed securities or their equivalent to the lender.

If the value of the collateral becomes less than the prescribed ratio, the borrower is required to increase the amount of the collateral. If the value becomes greater than the prescribed level, the lending agent must release the excess collateral.

To ensure that margin calls and release of collateral are timely made on a timely basis, the parties will agree upon and establish a daily mark-to-market valuation method. Otherwise, the collateral will be valued at the current market price.

In case of default by the borrower, the lending agent will have the option to sell the assigned collateral and offset the market value of the collateral against borrowed securities.

Lepanto hikes capital stock to P6.64B

By Rina T. Chichioco

LEPANTO CONSOLIDATED Mining Co. is increasing its authorized capital stock to P6.64 billion from P3.26 billion.

Lepanto corporate secretary Grace A. Javier informed the Philippine Stock Exchange that the securities and Exchange Commission has approved the company's application for its capital increase, which was supported by the more than 1.2-to-1 stock rights offering.

Lepanto is raising funds for various existing and future mine and other expenses. In November last year, Lepanto grew existing shareholders the right to subscribe to one share for every 1.2 shares held.

In a report to the PSE, Lepanto said the stock rights offering was expected to generate a little more than P5 billion, with net proceeds of about P2.9 billion.

The money will be used to fund the development of the Victoria project and settle debts with suppliers and advances of shareholders as well as replenish the company's investment branch fund.

Lepanto had projected a loss of more than P100 million for 2010 but expects to turn this around to an income of P219.29 million this year as metal sales are expected to reach 22,000 ounces of gold and 30,000 ounces of silver. By 2011, milling volume should reach 350,000 metric tons, according to Lepanto.

Lepanto has extended the 300 billion Php based on the most recent model for Victoria, which is located in Sitiohagan, Benguet.

Company presidents and COO Bruce G. Tay said earlier that Victoria currently has five years of extractable reserves. However, a lot of the areas still need to be developed before they can be ready for mining.

"Since the beginning of the year, our projects has been geared toward accelerating the development work on those areas to prepare them for mining by the second half of this year," Tay said.

He added that Lepanto encountered production equipment breakdowns, which were being addressed to improve operating efficiencies.

BPI Family sees more auto loans

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S biggest thrift bank, BPI Family Savings Bank, expects to sustain a double-digit growth in its auto lending portfolio this year on the back of robust consumer demand and streamlined loan processing.

Cesar Sarmiento of BPI Family, a leading provider of auto loans, also announced in a briefing yesterday that it would give qualified car loan applicants free global positioning system (GPS) navigator units for a limited period.

To avail of the GPS, loan applicants must have a minimum loan of P500,000 and a minimum term of 36 months for brand-new cars and the vehicles must be for private use only.

Retail Sarmiento, BPI Family senior vice president, said the bank's auto business would likely grow faster than its thrifty average this year. Its upto loaning promotion on interest rates, he said the bank was looking forward to a "very stable" banking time, as consumers still clanking on financing affordable to households.

At present, the bank's car loans carry an interest rate of as low as 8.25 percent to a high of 11 percent a year.

In 2010, BPI Family's auto loan volumes grew 35 percent, faster than the industry growth of 27 percent. This resulted in a 31-percent increase in outstanding car loan growth to close a year ago.

Based on the 4.9-percent projected increase in sale of automobiles by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) this year, Sarmiento said BPI Family's car loans business should grow at least 20 percent.

According to Campi, sales of motor vehicles rose 27.2 percent to 260,000 to 350,490 units, setting a new record high.

Sarmiento said the continued growth of the auto industry should benefit the bank's auto lending portfolio. About 55 percent of car buyers in the Philippines tend to seek bank financing than buy in cash.

Aside from that, he said the bank had put in place a nationwide dealer network. Sarmiento that would make only branches for borrowers to find out his eligibility to obtain financing.

The bank has also recently launched its new loans website (www.bpifamily.com.ph), which makes it easier for applicants to apply and locate via the Web. Apart from an application form that can be filled out online, the Web provides a list of automobile brands and models as well as their specifications and prices. It also has loan calculator is also available to give buyers an idea of how much they need to shell out for monthly payments.

Average loan size in BPI Family's portfolio is P700,000 while the most popular terms are 36-48 months. Given this, Sarmiento said the bank would give away the GPS for loans approximating the most popular size and terms.

The units must be delivered by April 1, 2011 to get the free GPS.

"The GPS has [long] been in Europe and the United States but in the Philippines, it is made available only to high-end units," Sarmiento said.

GPS is a navigation and position-positioning tool first developed by the US Department of Defense in the 1970s to assist soldiers and military vehicles, planes and ships in accurately determining their location worldwide. Nowadays, handheld GPS gadgets are commercially available as a navigation and positioning tool to motorists, boaters as well as for almost all outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, fishing and kayaking.

Treasury eyes sale of P30-B retail bonds

From page B1

Tan said the Treasury was looking at making the sale of RTBs a regular activity to give consumer investment opportunities to individuals or small enterprises. Unlike regular bonds that require much larger amounts of minimum investments, RTBs only require a minimum investment of P5,000.

"We are studying what frequency is ideal for the sale of RTBs," Tan said, adding that one option was to make the sale of RTBs once every semester.

Meanwhile, Tan said the Philippine government was also considering to sell samurai bonds (debt instruments issued in the Japanese market by a non-Japanese entity) as one way to complete its borrowing program for this year.

He said the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) has expressed interest in providing guarantee to the samurai bonds. A guarantee by JBIC is expected to help reduce interest rates to be sought by potential Japanese investors.

Unlike the 2011 borrowing plan, the government is planning to raise about P118 billion from foreign currency and exchange and P197 billion from the domestic market.

The borrowing program takes into account the government's maturing obligations for the year and the expected budget deficit of P280 billion, equivalent to 3.2 percent of the projected gross domestic product for 2011.

Philippine Stock Exchange

As of February 15, 2011

Currencies

February 15, 2011 Country	Unit	Cash Equivalent	Check Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	dollar	43.9170	43.9670	43.9420
Japan	yen	0.5403	0.5423	0.5413
United Kingdom	pound	71.0617	71.1317	71.0967
Hong Kong	dollar	5.6377	5.6437	5.6407
Singapore	dollar	34.1100	34.1600	34.1350
Canada	dollar	43.9450	43.9950	43.9700
Switzerland	franc	47.5900	47.6600	47.6250
Australia	dollar	44.3400	44.4000	44.3700
Taiwan	dollar	1.4900	1.4970	1.4935
Saudi Arabia	riyal	11.7000	11.7200	11.7100
Europe	euro	60.2700	60.3500	60.3100
Korea	won	0.0390	0.0394	0.0392
Thailand	baht	1.4600	1.4700	1.4650
UAE	dirham	11.9600	11.9800	11.9700
Kuwait	dinar	156.0000	156.4000	156.2000
China	yuan	6.6800	6.6900	6.6850
Qatar	riyal	12.0600	12.0800	12.0700
Brunei	dollar	34.1100	34.1600	34.1350
Macau	pataca	5.4900	5.5000	5.4950
Vietnam	dong	0.0021	0.0022	0.0021
Indonesia	rupiah	0.0048	0.0049	0.0048
Denmark	krone	8.0900	8.1000	8.0950
Sweden	krona	6.4800	6.4900	6.4850
Norway	krone	7.5000	7.5100	7.5050

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Young billionaires

If 2007 be deliberating during a turbulent phase in the stock market for construction and engineering firm Megaworld Corp.—led by thirty-something civil engineer Michael Gotianun and Edgar Saavedra—is seeking to make their own party's footing on the Phil. Ayala trading floor smelter on Friday with "bull" permits.

Following the recent rundown of bringing show 'biz personalities into the trading floor as listing day, Megaworld will have as its main guest actress Anne Curtis, the new face of SM Development Corp. Apart from Megaworld's being a major contractor of SMDC (which accounts for 30 percent of its business), the fly family has actually bought into this DFO and acquired a 20 percent block. Aside from Curtis, Boss trailers who are weary of this trading volumes and heavy hoops selling since the start of 2011 could at least look forward to an international mix of Brazilian, Swedish, American and Thai models gracing the trading floor on Friday.

With the SM group (through an unlisted company) single-handedly accounting for 60 percent of Megaworld's P2.20-billion IPO, the offering was 2.5 times oversold. Perched on top of that event's closing, our stock market source said, food and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp. has also expressed interest to buy in—which could benefit the construction firm's bid to expand to its infrastructure building—but there weren't enough shares left for sale.

For Filipino billionaires to have made Bruno Mars' "Billionaire" their anthem, Saavedra and Gotianun could just be their idols. Upon listing on Friday, Megaworld will have a market capitalization of about P6.72 billion, which means the young businessmen magnates' respective stake of 28.5-4 percent and 25-44 percent will be valued at close to P1 billion each. And they're not even 40. And sorry ladies, they're both taken. Boots C. Dumlao

Affordable luxury

SITTP successfully crowd-sourcing one of Metro Manila's biggest eyesores into the gleaming Alphaland Southgate Tower, the real estate firm controlled by businessman and dealmaker Roberto "Bobby" Ongpin is now setting its sights on a more ambitious project in Makati City.

The company has begun marketing its latest project, the City Club, located in a new residential-commercial complex right across from the Makati Fire Station complex along Ayala Avenue.

Targeted at upwardly mobile yuppies, the City Club has around 2 hectares of floor space in three towers, anchored by a three-story mall and a three tower residential condo complex (the entire project being dubbed the "Makati Place").

Marketing brochures that Alphaland is just about to distribute say that the City Club will have facilities like a gym, elevating ring, an aerobics and yoga studio, conference rooms and a business center, tennis and badminton courts, a basketball court, and three swimming pools, among others.

"What we are offering is something that one can find in Manila Polo Club, minus the horses," Alphaland president Mario Orzo said, who explained that the exclusive club aims to attract members who find other venues like the Team Club too thin and stuffy.

Shares at the City Club are selling for P500,000 each and the project will be completed in late 2012, he said. Boots C. Lucas

Speaking of luxury...

FOUR months after moving to their new building in Bonifacio Global City, the Villanueva Cruz Marcelo and Angangco Law Office (a.k.a. CRC Law or "The Firm") seems to have settled in quite nicely despite hearing their old action-packed digs in the center of Makati.

The firm's new home is an imposing 11-storey gray building on the north side of the newly-developed business district, with a commanding view that extends past the Ortigas area (the only downside being the unmissable sight of "informal settlers" near the Pasig River, if one looks down).

To keep the lawyers well-fed, a fine dining restaurant called "Kammakoto" is located in the penthouse, operated by veteran caterer Gaita Perez (the cousin of one of The Firm's editors, Mae Rosario).

A partner of founding partners Avelino Cruz, Pancho Villaraza, Raoul Angangco and Sonny Marcelo greets the entrance of the restaurant, leaving no questions as to who the firm's taxmasters are.

There is also an adjacent bar named "Cricket" (lawyer humor, go figure), which the idea is to name one of the lounges "Dismiss" was supposedly thumbed down.

The building also has a helipad for VIP clients who prefer to come in and out in style.

The law firm occupies seven of the 11 floors while the rest are set to be rented out.

It's nice to see from their old home, the soon-to-be-razed ITA Building along Perea St., and far from controversial political relations that so much dirt is dished during election season. Patricia L. Lucas

Cities Online on a roll

LEGEND online stock brokerage Cities Online now has a total investor base of 16,000 active clients, equivalent to more than half the client base of many big banks' private banking or trust units.

How else can the brokerage house maximize this cadre of retail clients? It seems close to distribute mutual funds managed by reputable fund managers. What's more, it hopes to use the same online platform to allow retail investors to trade not just equities but also fixed income instruments, albeit to restrictions from the Bankers Association of the Philippines-led fixed income exchange, Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corp. Boots C. Bonifacio

Mirror, mirror on the airwaves

ADN can a television network boost its ratings without even needing its existing programming?

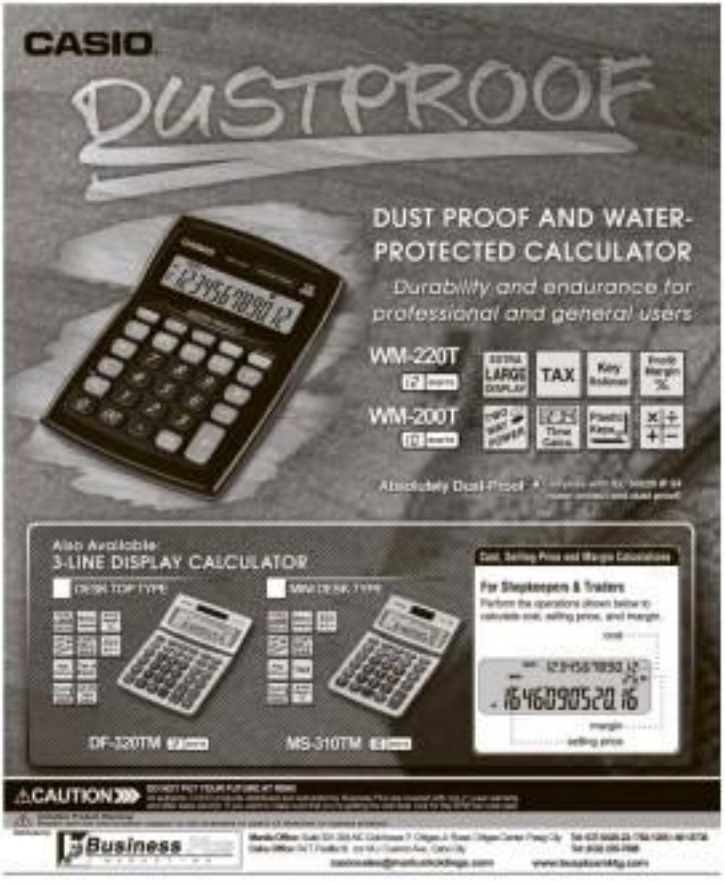
One may may be in simply saturate the airwaves with its programs and flood the competition out of the way.

Word on the street is that ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. is exploring the idea of entering into a "blocktime" agreement with the management of IBC 13 for the latter to simulcast the former's programs.

The idea is for ABS-CBN to take advantage of the supposedly massive "superior channel positioning" to overcome frequent viewers complaints about the broadcast giant's weak signal in some key areas in the crucial Mega Manila" area.

Both ABS-CBN chair Gabby Lopez and president Charo Santos-Concio are supposedly convinced that the station's signal woes are capping its earnings (giving even loyal viewers little choice but to switch stations channels). Jacinto L. Lucas

Biz Buzz is a column of the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Send tips to bizbuzz@inquirer.com.ph or fax to 896-6035. Please include your name, address and contact number. Only those for publication will be acknowledged.



New Makati high-rise rewriting rule in high-end home security

Already redefining privileged living standards with everything in quality, luxury and service, The Grand Midori Makati has another symbol of excellence, one that every cosmopolitan homeowner only dreams of – security that can rival, or even surpass that of five-star luxury resorts.

Indeed, The Grand Midori Makati has been conceived with a signature mix of the unique craftsmanship, destination and passion for quality by Federal Land Inc., ORIX Corporation of Japan, and Metrobank.

"In a way, given its seamless fusion of convenience, elegance, and security all in one grand design, The Grand Midori Makati may even be described as the latest high rise to rise out of Makati that represents luxury at one's fingertips," beams Jose Mari Banzon, general manager of Federal Land, Inc.

Situated in a high profile neighborhood that houses not just the Makati Central Business District but also the country's most unique and opulent lifestyle establishments, The Grand Midori Makati is a luxury residence that offers comfortable lifestyle complete with all the amenities and perks one can expect from the finer things in life. Its ever-matrix styled, grand fusion of Filipino-Japanese ingenuity and design has made it even more unique.

The fully equipped home revolutionizes the convenience of modern technology into an overall atmosphere. From unit finishes to the creative and elegant display of amenities, this new development sets new the bore for a privileged lifestyle.

At The Grand Midori Makati, each genius example with convenience as unit owners and visitors can be picked up or dropped off at the building's elegant porte-cochère leading straight to the grand lobby. The soothing Koi pond at the lobby and the Zen garden to be found in every floor also serve as welcome respite from the ever-intimidating clatter of the outside world.

And here's more. Prioritizing residents' well-being, The Grand Midori Makati uses state-of-the-art security system starting with the issuance of Personalized Access Card Key (PACK) to unit owners. The PACK secures home owners entrance only to their floor, eliminating unauthorized access. The installation of dual close circuit cameras in all floors and in the common areas further seals The Grand Midori Makati's ambiance as redefining luxury, style and comfort.

Such attention to details is a manifestation of the development firm's and their commitment in creating a residential masterpiece that's brimming with world-class design (by leading Japanese firm Tange Associates, who did the blueprints of luxury developments like The Romans Hotel in Italy and One Raffles Place in Singapore, is in charge of designing The Grand Midori Makati's common areas) while its state-of-the-art amenities have also been designed to maximize the concept of luxury living.

That said, The Grand Midori Makati represents a vision of cosmopolitan living – giving its residents a new experience of the luxurious lifestyle. Model units of The Grand Midori Makati can now be viewed at its on-site showroom located along Legaspi St. Legaspi Village, Makati City. For inquiries, please call (02) 310-5155 or visit www.thegrandmidorimakati.com.ph.

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FEDERAL LAND-ORIX

Metrobank

BUSINESS

To rein in bond rates, BTr rejects some bids

Treasury only raises a third of P9-B borrowing plan

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of the Treasury yesterday rejected some of the bids for the 25-year Treasury bonds to prevent a faster rate of rise in interests as investors were spooked by inflationary concerns.

The Treasury's auction committee only accepted P3 billion worth of bids, with the interest rate for the 25-year bonds settling at 8.34 percent.

Yesterday's interest rate was up 20.3 basis points from the 7.925 percent registered in the previous auction held last September. As a result, the Treasury managed to raise only about a third of the supposed borrowing program of P9 billion.

Tenders actually reached P10.304 billion. But treasury officials opted to raise less money from bond investors to prevent an even faster rise in interest rates.

Had the treasury officials stuck to their P9-billion borrowing program, the interest rate on the 25 year bonds would have increased to a higher rate of 8.338 percent.

"We accepted that amount of bids, taking into account what we deem as a reasonable rate," said National Treasurer Roberto Tan, who also heads the auction committee.

Tan yesterday told reporters after the auction that the latest interest rate on 25-year bonds was a little over 8 percent in the secondary market.

With that figure in mind, the Treasury committee refused to allow the rate in the primary market to rise any higher than the 8.34 percent set in yesterday's auction.

Tan said some of the usual bond investors were not keen on competing aggressively for the 25-year bonds, preferring to invest in shorter term instruments due to rising concerns over inflation.

Since inflation is expected to accelerate in the months ahead, the thought lingered on Philstar may soon decide to raise key policy rates, market movers said.

When that happens, the government will be forced to allow interest rates on Treasury bills and bonds to rise as well, they explained.

This is the reason why some investors are waiting for the BSP to hike key rates before they acquire government securities, the sources said.

The Philippines, like other emerging markets in Asia, is expected to post re-

TO RATE ON B7

CIIF Oil Mills increases export revenue by 110%

By Abigail L. Ho

CIIF OIL Mills Group registered $240 million in export revenues last year, a 110-percent increase from the $114 million posted in 2009.

CIIF-OMG president and chief executive Jessi Atienza said the volume of coconut oil products that the company shipped last year reached 252,650 metric tons (MT), 77.6 percent more than 2009's 142,248 MT.

This improvement in the company's exports enabled it to boost revenues by 52 percent to almost P14.2 billion. Operating income likewise more than doubled to P971 million in 2010 from P463 million the year before.

From 2005 to 2008, CIIF-OMG incurred losses totaling nearly P1.5 billion: P33 million in 2005, P696 million in 2006, and P746 million in 2007. These losses were mainly attributed to poor forecasting, which resulted in forward contracts with buyers even without the physical inventory of copra.

What happened then was that the company had to purchase copra at prices higher than their prevailing in the market.

Apart from the forward contracts, CIIF-OMG also incurred huge freight costs, placed at around $88 a ton, prior to 2005.

Year-long 2009, however, CIIF-OMG implemented some belt-tightening measures. Last year's operating expenses, for example, reached P738 million, only 12 percent higher than in the previous year, despite the implementation of a 40% increase among employees.

Freight cost also went down to only $38 a ton. Plant utilization, on the other hand, increased to 74 percent.

"This is quite an achievement...considering there is excess crushing capacity in the country today. Total capacity is more than double the total copra production," Atienza said in a statement.

The company was also able to pay in full its acquisition from Mitsubishi Corp. of a 40-percent stake in Manila Refining Corp., a producer of specialty fats and oils.

NiHao raises stake in nickel operator

By Rose T. Cleofanoba

NIHAO MINERAL Resources International Inc. has increased its stake in Oriental Vitoro Mining (Philippines Corp. (Orvi) with the acquisition of an additional 60,800 shares.

With the acquisition, NiHao's stake in Orvi has gone up to 30 percent.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, NiHao said it had executed a deed of absolute sale for the acquisition of the additional shares, having fully paid the purchase price for the stock.

"After the acquisition, NiHao is the registered owner of 67,800 shares, or 30 percent, of the issued and outstanding capital stock of Orvi," said NiHao corporate secretary Antonio C. Cabrera Jr.

On March 28, 2010, NiHao acquired some 3,008 shares, equivalent to 28 percent, of the issued and outstanding capital stock of Orvi.

NiHao earlier announced that it would also acquire an additional 60,800 shares from two shareholders at the purchase price of P60 million once the Securities and Exchange Commission approved the increase in Orvi's authorized capital stock to P400 million from P66 million, with a par value of P1.00 a share.

In 2008, Orvi acquired mining properties and operating rights in Umagat province where rich deposits of nickel and chromite ores had been identified.

According to a source privy to Orvi's operations, the mine's 50.8 nickel ore is expected to be completed within the month.

Orvi is currently studying the nickel reserves at the Pulle nickel mine, which straddles the municipalities of Loreto and Tubajon on Dinagat Island.

The mine are said to contain an estimated 10 million wet metric tons of metal resources.

The validation is being undertaken in accordance with the Philippine Mineral Reporting Code. NiHao requested last December.

Orvi plans to ship nickel ore

BRANCH B7

China CPI surprisingly muted, lending brisk

But state media data may be 'false dawn,' analysts warn

BEIJING—Chinese inflation was lower than forecast at 4.9 per cent in the year to January, but price pressures continued to build and will force the central bank to step in to counter signs of gradual monetary tightening.

That was underlined by a hike in bank reserve requirements for the second time in just over six weeks to battle inflation. Beijing has also raised the amount of money banks have to hold in reserve seven times since the start of last year to try to stop inflation from getting out of control.

Consumer price inflation (CPI) last month was below a median forecast in a Reuters poll of 5.3 percent and followed a 4.6 percent increase in December. However, talk had swirled in markets on Monday that the figure could be below 5 percent.

"Though the market thought the softer than expected CPI, it may provide a false dawn and should be considered with caution mainly because recent indicators and developments still signal that upside risk to inflation persists," said Connie Tse, economist at Standard PIB in Singapore.

In one sign of the accumulating pressures, core inflation, stripped of volatile food prices, jumped 2.6 percent year on year for January, its fastest rate since at least 2002, from 2.1 percent a month earlier.

In another sign, soaring global commodity costs fuelled producer prices up 6.6 percent in the year to January, accelerating from 5.9 percent in December and well above the 4.1 percent rise forecast by analysts.

The huge increase in PPI inflation suggests that price pressures will remain uncomfortably strong, at least for the next few months," said Brian Jackson, economist with Royal Bank of Canada in Hong Kong.

New calculation

Asian stocks and global commodities were largely flat, having jumped on Monday when investors got the lower-than-expected inflation figure first mulled through markets, easing fears that China would need to embark aggressive monetary tightening.

The National Bureau of Statistics also announced an adjustment in the way it calculates consumer price inflation, saying that it better reflected the evolution in Chinese consumption patterns.

Housing was given a much larger share of the new CPI basket, while the weighting of food prices was reduced. These changes were consistent with an economy that is fast becoming more prosperous, allowing authorities to put a smaller portion of their incomes on basic needs and more on big-ticket items.

Many in the market had expected that the adjustment, conducted every five years, would lower the CPI, but the statistics agency said the adjustment had actually added 0.024 percentage point to January's reading.

"February CPI is expected to be above 5.2 percent, and it's a significantly lower than that, we may conclude that inflation in China has changed fundamentally. Or we may believe that the CPI indicator itself is quite doubtful in terms of reliability," said Gao Shanwen, chief economist with Shenwan Securities in Beijing.

But at least some investors and analysts took the statistics agency at its word, and said that lower inflationary pressures would reduce the need for a big dose of interest rate increases.

China's main stock index rose up 0.7 percent after nearly 2% per cent on Monday.

Ting Lu, an economist with Bank of America-Merrill Lynch, noted that the biggest surprise was the 0.6 percentage point increase in food prices year on year. Many had thought a larger rise was in store, because the Chinese New Year fell earlier in 2011 than 2010 and that was expected to push up food costs in January.

"The implication here is that inflation pressure might be smaller than the market had thought," he said.

Upside risks

Despite increasing interest rates and raising banks reserve ratios, Chinese officials remain concerned about the still rapid expansion of bank lending.

The Beijing Reporter on bank lending suggests Chinese banks started the year with their usual lending frenzy.

Bank of America poll had forecast that January lending would total 1.2 trillion yuan, or 17 percent of the 7 trillion yuan assumed government target.

Reuters

Thai exchange's IPO pushed back to 2013

BANGKOK—The Stock Exchange of Thailand, operator of the nation's bourse, postponed a plan to sell shares to the public until 2013 because of a delay in the completion of new legislation, President Chumnporn Iveharoenkul said.

Thailand's government is still reviewing a law that would transform the exchange into a private company. Chumnporn in an interview in his office in Bangkok yesterday. An earlier plan to offer shares to the public in 2011 was delayed last year because of political turmoil.

The Thai exchange, Southeast Asia's fourth-biggest by market value, wants to sell shares to raise funds for expansion and compete with rivals in the economies of Southeast Asian nations, Chumnporn said. Exchanges in the region are developing cross-border trading links to make their markets more accessible and spur trading.

"The delay is out of our control because the legislative process involves many departments and organizations," Chumnporn said. National elections scheduled for later this year will further delay the bill, Chumnporn said, as we will need to wait for the new parliament to assemble it," he said.

Thailand, Southeast Asia's biggest economy after Indonesia, has been saddled by political unrest as protesters hold rallies to pressure Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to step down. Abhisit this month said he will hold an election by the end of June to help ease political tension that has resulted in about 100 deaths since the last vote in 2007.

Trading Monopoly

The regulations under review would also end the Stock Exchange of Thailand's monopoly on equities trading, Thanchai Phochanachotikun, secretary-general of the Securities and Exchange Commission said in an interview on Feb. 11.

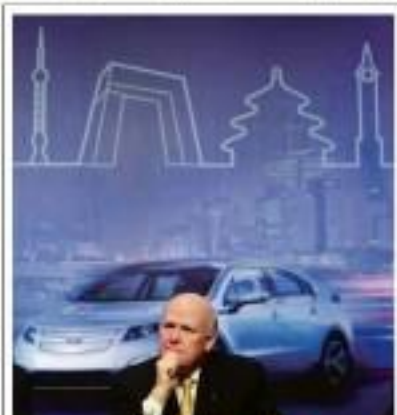
The market regulator will allow new securities exchanges to compete with the Thai bourse to lower the cost of raising capital for domestic companies, Pabuchai said.

"Thailand's government has pushed the 30-year-old exchange to become profit-oriented and to reduce share-trading fees to attract overseas investors.

Thailand Futures Exchange, a unit of the main bourse, will start trading contracts for oil, silver and other commodity products this year, Chumnporn said.

"Trading of oil and metal futures will be the main driver for our earnings growth," he said.

Bloomberg



CH-CHIEF Executive Daniel Akerson listens to a question at a news conference in Beijing Feb. 11, 2011. General Motors Co. will add over 20 new and upgraded models in China, Akerson said Tuesday, as the US automaker looks to cement its leading position in the world's biggest car market by exclusive the No. 1 carmaker apart from Ryanis Motor Corp. BLOOM

Trans-Atlantic bourse deal approaches completion

NEW YORK/FRANKFURT—Deutsche Boerse and NYSE Euronext are expected to address thorny political issues as they prepare to announce a deal Thursday to create the world's largest exchange operator.

The two have hammered out a broad framework for a merger deal that focuses on functions and personalities, with several executives chosen for key posts across Europe and the United States, three people familiar with the plans said.

Another source added that major issues like the exact exchange ratio and the premium to be paid to NYSE Euronext have been sorted out, and a definitive agreement is expected to be announced on Tuesday.

Among the issues they will leave in the technical basket for now are what to call the merged entity, how exactly it will run itself, and which technologies it will favor, sources said.

Putting those off may only add to the questions being asked by some politicians on both sides of the Atlantic about whether the deal should be approved by competition officials upon the closer to rival bidders for NYSE Euronext—one news report on Monday cited CME Group Inc as a potential buyer.

Some issues facing Deutsche Boerse NYSE Euronext tie-up, which could still derail the plan, would need to be resolved over the coming weeks, said Andreas Preuss, who conjured of uncertainty because talks continue.

"The biggest question mark in general is obviously the European political and regulatory landscape coming out of this," one source said.

The boards of NYSE Euronext and Deutsche Boerse are set to vote Tuesday two sources said. Deutsche Boerse will also publish quarterly results Tuesday.

The Frankfurt- and New York-based companies were center stage in the merger frenzy that erupted last week and heated up on Monday as Deutsche Börse/Euronext said it was in talks to own jointly and as traders feared that CME Group could jump into the fray.

Jim Sinclair, Bloomberg reported that CME Group, currently the world's top derivatives exchange group, may make a hostile bid for NYSE Euronext, citing bankers.

A spokesperson for Chicago-based CME declined to comment. CME officials have been guiding investors away from expectations that the company would do a merger deal.

Deutsche Börse, the world's fourth-largest financial exchange operator, is closely watching the merger speculation. Chief Executive Reto Francioni declined.

Deutsche Börse and NYSE Euronext is interested in China and India as markets where it could pursue expansion because of their growth potential and similarities in terms of products, she added. But a partnership with CME also lists "room to grow," but did not elaborate.

Ms Andreas Preuss, Bloomberg reported, said it was in talks with other Singapore Exchange about changes to board arrangements as the talks seek to win political and regulatory support for their proposed tie-up.

Reuters

Clothing prices to rise 10% on tight cotton supply

NEW YORK—Shoppers looking to update their wardrobes may find their money won't stretch as far.

As the world economy recovers and demand for goods rises, a surge in raw material and labor costs is squeezing retailers and manufacturers who have record or weak to pass expenses.

Clothing prices had dropped for a decade as rising inflation and cheap overseas labor helped hold down how shoppers' costs. During the recession, retailers and clothing makers ran little and experimented with fabric blends to keep prices in check.

But cotton has more than doubled in price over the past year, hitting all-time highs. The price of synthetic fabrics has jumped roughly 50 percent as demand for alternatives has risen.

Clothing prices are expected to rise about 10 percent in retailing months, with the biggest increases in the second half of the year, said Brad Flickinger IE president of Strategic Resource Group.

Brooks Brothers' wrinkle-free men's dress shirts now cost $88, up from $79.50. Levi Strauss & Co., Wrangler jeans maker VF Corp., J.C. Penney Co., Nike and clothing's shoe seller Steve Madden also plan increases.

More specifics on price increases are expected when clothing retailers such as J.C. Penney Co. and Abercrombie & Fitch Co. report financial results this month.

"All of our brands, every single brand, will take some price increases," said Eric Wiseman, chair and CEO of VF Corp., which makes clothes for The North Face, Nautica, Wrangler and Lee brands. Cotton accounts for half the production cost of jeans, which make up about one-third of VF's sales. Wiseman said shoppers will suffer less clothes are made. Clothing makers are using more synthetics like rayon and designing jeans with fewer beads and other embellishments. Shoppers also will have fewer color choices.

Retailers are trying to figure out whether the consumer demand that gave them strong holiday sales will last. The rise in higher prices will nip it in the bud. Stores that cater to low- and middle-income shoppers will have the hardest time passing along price increases.

AP

Asian stocks steady, copper up on China inflation

TOKYO/SINGAPORE—Asian stocks were broadly steady on Tuesday after traders took China's closely-watched inflation data in their stride, while the euro regained some ground after hitting a three-week low the previous day.

Chinese consumer price inflation accelerated to 4.9 percent in the year to January it matched the widespread figure that rattled through markets on Monday, but was below the earlier consensus forecast of 5.3 percent.

Analysts remained wary of a build-up in China's price pressures, saying Beijing would raise interest rates further, given continued rises in food prices. "The data probably slightly eased expectations of immediate tightening, although in the overall scheme of things, this doesn't change the fact that China is still in a tightening phase," said Eisuke Sasahara, chief economist at SMBC.

MSCI's Asia Pacific index excluding Japan , which mapped five-straight sessions of losses on Monday was up 0.66 percent. The Shanghai stock market rose more than 1 percent compared with a rise of 0.28 percent before the Chinese inflation data came out. On Monday it jumped 2.3 percent on market concerns told investors in November.

Higher costs also will affect how clothes are made. Clothing makers are using more synthetics like rayon and designing jeans with fewer beads and other embellishments. Shoppers also will have fewer color choices.

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AP

Apple's Cook visited Foxconn in 2010 suicide response

SAN FRANCISCO—Apple Inc. Chief Operating Officer Tim Cook visited Foxconn Technology Group's Shenzhen, China, facility last year as part of an effort to stop worker suicides, Apple said in a yearly report on its suppliers' social responsibility.

A group led by Cook met with Foxconn Chief Executive Officer Terry Gou in China in June after 11 Foxconn workers committed suicide. The meeting was held to outline measures Foxconn was putting in place to prevent more deaths, Apple said in the report sources. Most workers who took their own lives did so by leaping from occupied-use buildings at company dormitories, Bloomberg Businessweek reported in a Sept. 9 news story.

Gou's team, which included suicide prevention specialists, made recommendations that Foxconn followed, including hiring psychological counselors, opening a 24-hour care center and installing nets in factories, Apple said. Cook is now handling day-to-day operations at Apple, maker of the iPhone and Macintosh personal computers, while CEO Steve Jobs is on medical leave, the company said on Jan. 17.

Apple, based in Cupertino, Calif., gained $2.20 to $359.38 at 4 p.m. New York time in Nasdaq Stock Market trading yesterday. The shares have increased 11 percent this year.

Interviews, Inspections

Foxconn has more than 1 million employees who churn out products for customers including Apple, Dell Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co. and Sony Corp. In its report, Apple said its team interviewed workers and their managers to prevent and inspected Foxconn's work and living areas.

Apple's supplier responsibility report also said the company audited 127 supplier sites last year, 93 of them for the first time. More than 40 percent of the companies inspected last year said Apple was the first company to have audited them for social responsibility, the report said. In addition to China, Apple since 2007 has conducted audits in Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, the Czech Republic and the US.

Apple said it had addressed violations of its supplier code of conduct, including excessive fees charged to workers by recruitment agencies, use of underage workers and exposure to harmful chemicals.

Bloomberg

DOF mulling over . . .

From page B6

more.

The government's debt stock, expressed as a percentage of gross domestic product, has hovered within the range of 50 and 58 percent in the past three years—much higher than the average for Southeast Asian countries.

In an interview, Finance Secretary Jesus A. Purisima said the government this year hoped to source 75 percent of its borrowings from local lenders—up from 67 percent in 2010.

"Our plans are already showing the details that we're going to borrow locally for the coming years," Purisima said, alluding to an all-out local push to reducing exposure to foreign exchange volatility.

He said that based on the borrowing plan for 2011, the government will has to source some $1.5 billion in foreign loans.

Also, Malacañang is continually weighing various options, such as a new dollar bond float, another foray into the Japanese yen bond market or following through with the newly revised market for global peso bonds.

To rein in bond . . .

From page B6

speculative economic growth this year. This outlook fueled investors concerns over rising inflation.

As income levels rise, so will demand for goods and services. These developments will accelerate inflation, market players said.

The economy grew by 7.3 percent last year, the fastest in about three decades. The government's economic team expects the economy to grow by 7 to 8 percent.

The BSP adopted four inflation would likely accelerate this year, that it stressed that, so far, the projected movement of consumer prices fell within comfortable levels.

Inflation averaged at 3.8 percent in 2010. The BSP sees inflation this year averaging at a factor june of 4-4 percent—well within the government's official target of between 3 and 5 percent.

NiHao increases . . .

From page B6

to China, Australia and Japan.

Ores had also identified copper, gold, zinc, sulphur, pyrite, phosphate and coal resources in Surigao and Surigao provinces.

Its nickel, chromite and coal projects are lined up for commercial production on the second quarter of 2014.

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IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES, A NEW BATCH OF FILIPINO MARKETERS SHINES THROUGH!

Congratulations to these young marketing achievers whose "CAN-DO" spirit lifts us to inspiring heights!

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The Young Market Masters Awards (YMMA) seeks to acknowledge the country's outstanding marketers and entrepreneurs who are 35 years old and below. It aims to encourage and motivate bright young minds to be innovative brand-builders and excel in the competitive world of marketing. This year, YMMA is proud to present eight young achievers whose achievements rouse us to celebrate the best in the Filipino. The 6th YMMA awardees 2011 (from left to right) **Jonathan Joson** (Media Contacts Philippines), **Pamela Takai-Wolf** (Foods Philippines), **Victor Hugo, Jr.** (Unilever Asia Private Limited Singapore), **Anna Lourdes Legarda** (Procter & Gamble Philippines), **Winsley Royce Bangit** (Globe Telecom), **Joseph Emmanuel Dela Cruz** (Procter & Gamble Asia), **Ma. Belinda Reyes** (GlaxoSmithKline Philippines), **Roel Chan** (Primer Group of Companies)

Flanked by YMMA founders **Josiah Go** (far left) and **Chiqui Escareal-Go** (far right), the 6th YMMA judges are (from left to right) **Noel Lorenzana** (President of NutriAsia Group) **Lisa Gokongwei-Cheng** (President of Summit Media) **Augusto De Leon** (President and Principal Consultant of De Leon Consulting)

BUSINESS

DOE to cancel 60 renewable energy contracts

But deficient firms given chance to rectify issues

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy will revoke at least 50 of the more than 200 renewable energy contracts that it awarded last year, after contract holders failed to comply with requirements and work programs commitments.

Mario Marasigan, head of the DOE's renewable energy management bureau, said letters were sent to contract holders asking them to explain why they were unable to comply and to give them a chance to address their deficiencies.

"There are many non-performing contracts, so we wrote them letters asking for updates. Some have already responded. We re-evaluated them and found that some of them just failed to fulfill requirements. They're compliant but they just failed to submit," he said in an interview yesterday.

Of the more than 200 contracts reviewed, he related that 50 to 60 were found to be non-compliant. They were given 60 days to submit whatever they lacked, after which their contracts would be cancelled.

In a separate interview, Energy Secretary Jose Rene Almendras said the deadline for the completion of the requirements was slated for the end of the month.

The projects covered by the cancelled contracts would then be offered to investors interested in developing RE projects, he said.

Holders of the contracts that would be revoked would be given a chance to re-bid for these contracts, but with the assurance that they would be able to comply with all the requirements this time.

"There will be no blacklisting, unless there's a big reason for us to do so," he said.

Asked if this could be seen as a step back in the country's efforts to develop RE projects, he said the contract review process was actually seen as a step forward.

He related that the Joint Senate-Chambers had sought a review of the RE contracts awarded, to ensure that these would all be administered properly.

"We're doing an honest-to-good-ness review, which should be good for the industry," he said.

Marasigan added that this was also part of the DOE's overall due diligence efforts.

The DOE, even as months last year, awarded more than 200 contracts for the development of RE projects all over the country as part of the government's thrust to develop alternative sources of power.

ALMENDRAS

Only clean fuel buses may get past DOTC ban

By Paolo E. Montecillo

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications announced that it would only exempt buses that run on cleaner alternative fuels from the moratorium on the registration of new public utility vehicles.

The government imposed the moratorium to curb the rise in the number of buses plying Metro Manila roads, exacerbating traffic jams and pollution in the process.

But in an effort to address pollution, DOTC Secretary Jose de Jesus exempted buses powered by CNG (compressed natural gas) from the franchise moratorium.

De Jesus issued Department Order No. 2011-14 directing the LTFRB to open its franchise window for brand-new buses using CNG-fed engines.

As ordered, the LTFRB must furnish the DOTC with copies of its decision to grant franchises only to CNG-powered buses.

"CNG-fueled vehicles are environment-friendly and compliant with the Philippine initiatives on the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as well as help promote the use of alternative fuels in public transportation facilities. Hence, the DOTC promotes the use of this type of vehicles," De Jesus said.

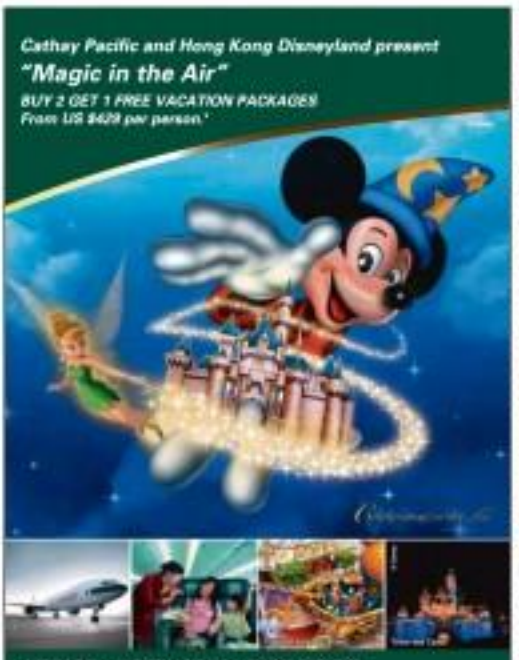
He also said CNG engines help reduce operation and maintenance costs of vehicles, thereby improving the efficiency of the public utility bus operations.

He clarified, however, that there are some limitations to the grant of franchise to CNG-fed buses.

"For one, the grant of franchise is still subject to identification of the route by the DOTC," De Jesus said.

The CNG-powered buses will only be allowed to ply routes that are not yet adequately served by existing bus companies.

Studies have shown that Metro Manila's roads have not been able to cope with the capital's rising population. The Japan International Cooperation Agency earlier said in a study that Ninoy Aquino International Airport could only handle a maximum of 1,400 buses a day from 3,500 buses ply the route daily.



DOF mulling over creation of risk management unit

By Bernel W. Dominguez

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is mulling over the creation of a debt and risk management unit in part of an effort to bring down the country's debt stock from the current 50.2 percent of domestic output to 47 percent by 2016.

According to a Malacañang document, the creation of such a unit is meant "to optimize savings."

The paper cited measures, including the selling-up of a comprehensive debt management system that covers contingent liabilities and PPP (public-private partnership)-related fiscal risks; diversifying sources, instruments and currency risk, as well as introducing innovative terms and features in the conduct of borrowing levels.

Also, economic managers want to "subject to rigid test of project viability and procurement processes" those projects that are funded out of government borrowings, whether or not these are sourced from official development assistance or commercially sourced, under the charters of state firms, the build-operate-transfer law or PPP arrangements.

SEE P2

BSP may post forex losses in '11

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said it would be willing to incur foreign exchange losses anew this year if upward pressures on the peso were to remain significant and require more dollar buying to prevent steep appreciation.

According to BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., one of the policies of the central bank is to allow the peso to be market determined, "let the currency rate intervene in the foreign exchange market from time to time to avoid sharp and sudden fluctuations of the exchange rate.

"What is important is for the BSP to perform its mandate," Tetangco told reporters.

He said posting income from foreign exchange operations was not a key priority of the BSP.

The BSP only posts losses due to foreign exchange operations—if it has to buy dollars to prevent the sharp rise of the peso. But it has consistently been recording profit from its other operations, he said.

Latest data from the central bank showed that it incurred P34 billion in losses from its foreign exchange operations in the first half of 2010 as it engaged in heavier-than-usual dollar buying to stem the appreciation of the peso.

The losses from its foreign exchange operations led the BSP to post an overall net income loss of P17.43 billion in the same period.

The BSP is expected to post a net loss in the full year of 2010 as the peso strengthened further in the second half. Michelle U. Remo

Public to be consulted on RE plan

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy will start today a series of regional public consultations for the formulation of rules governing the renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS).

The RPS aims to boost the development and use of renewable energy in the country by requiring that distribution utilities will source a certain portion of their power from eligible RE sources.

The rules will lay down the exact proportion that RE has to account for in a distribution utility's supply mix, as well as identify the installation targets for all RE resources as stated in the National Renewable Energy Program.

The first consultation will be held this afternoon in Bacolod, followed by Lucap City on Feb. 21, Cebu City on Feb. 23, Cagayan de Oro on Feb. 24, and Davao City on Feb. 25. Consultations will also be held in Clark Field, Pampanga and Metro Manila, but these have yet to be scheduled.

The DOE is allowed to review the RPS rules every two years or as necessary. The reviews are specially needed when the compliance costs significantly affects the rates to end-users or if the RPS targets cannot be complied with due to force majeure.

MOTORING

Editor Joey B. Arroyo

We said, they said: It's high time buyers and carmakers compared notes

Filling the gaps

By Teresa B. Salazar

BUYING A CAR is like getting married. After you've swept off your feet (inside the showroom, or after seeing the ad in the glossy brochure), you sign that paperwork and live and drive happily ever after with your chosen one.

That's a fairy tale. We all know that. But many marriages are formed on this harsh planet called the Earth, there will be terrifying downfalls and arduous uphills in your relationship with your car. Most best, you'll grow old together, though not necessarily the both of you aging gracefully while on it. At the worst, you'll grow to hate each other before the first 40,000 kilometer even comes), resulting to an "annulment" where it's the human who always feels short-changed.

Indeed, much like a marriage, then comes a bond among the buyer, the car and the carmaker. Once the ride is inside, the bond is sealed, and exists even after the link between the vehicle and the owner is terminated (either when the buyers resells the car or hands it down to the next of kin). This bond is either mistaken enough (and, depending on how the dealership treats buyer and manufacturer alike), and many times what the customer perceives and expects does not match the product's reality and the manufacturer's expectations of the product's impact on the customer.

Inquirer Motoring has asked manufacturers to reveal the common misconceptions customers have had of their models' features. The brave few have responded.

1st perception misconception: The brake system

Motorists have this impression that a perfect brake system is quiet, smooth and stop-on-a-dime responsive. What our manufacturer respondents want to make clear is that there are dynamics and laws of physics involved in brake systems.

Jay Jules Angeles, GMS Motors Inc vice president for after sales, revealed that some first-time customers of the Mercedes-Benz brand complain that the brake system of their brand new luxury vehicles are "noisy," and thus defective.

Dolor Angeles assures customers that Mercedes-Benz brakes have optimized grit (or what old time Benz drivers describe as "brobdat. Kapit" brakes) that makes the system squeak, especially during stop-and-go traffic when the driver half-releases the brake pedal. "The noise is due to the high grit quality of the brake system which results to better stopping distance." Veteran Benz owners know that this noise is an "endorsed" characteristic of Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

Grey Fernandez, Toyota Motor Corporation (Chevrolet Philippines) service manager for customer solutions services, explained that drivers of Chevy vehicles have complained of vibration on the brake pedal, particularly during applications at high speeds.

"The pulsating action of the brake pads when making contact with the rotor disc minimizes the risk of wheel lock-up in which the driver may lose steering control during sudden braking and while evading road debris. This feature is used by modern vehicles commonly called anti-lock brake system or ABS. The button simply allows sudden braking and steering simultaneously possible," Hernandez explained.

During the Jan. 27 Toyota media thanksgiving party, Toyota Motor Philippines president Michiteru Hagura disclosed to Inquirer Motoring's exclusive interview on the Prius' anti-lock brake system (even if "it worked properly"). He explained that customers had a specific idea of the stopping distance of a car, but the ABS actual stopping distance was longer. "It had that effect on customers' braking habits," he stated.

2nd perception misconception: Noisy wipers

Some newly designed wipers of luxury cars, such as pedite wipers (which are made of pure rubber), are seen by drivers as flimsy on how lightly on the windshield that, at slow speeds, they are annoyed by the sound the wipers make as they rub across the glass.

"The sound is due to the in-

TO PAGE B2 »

Urban Elegance

A UNIQUE launch location for drop-an'-show big-arrival, the BMW X3.

BMW X3 launched atop a multi-level carpark at the heart of the Makati financial district

By Jason R. Ang

ASIAN CARMAKERS Corporation launched the all-new BMW X3 in a different kind of venue last week, as they converted the top deck of the 6,113-by-six-level car park into a driver's theater of sorts. A large tent was erected to conduct daily home the evening's celebration, look

human and automotive. Inside, the setup centered on several large projection screens, and in front, the star of the show, the all-new crossover from the German bringers of Joy. Taking a cue from BMW's The Ultimate Driving Machine slogan, ACC showed a film clip starring the X3 and its dramatic driving abilities.

The X3's design draws a Urban Ele-

THE ALL-NEW BMW X3.
MAKE INTERESTING HAPPEN.

Printed and distributed by Newspaper Direct

THE X3 boasts lessons of the new Auto Start Stop system for better fuel efficiency.

MODEL Abena and Marian Perez

power, comprised of the signature twin-kidney grille up front with quad round headlamps, sharply creased door panels and pronounced wheel arches, leading up to the U-shaped taillight clusters.

The interior seems much roomier than the previous car's, thanks to the enlarged dimensions and also the new cabin layout. The seats, console is still classed slightly to wards the driver, in a nod to the X3's driver-pleasing character. The seats are easy to climb in and out of, thanks to a properly high hip point. Ladies should find the outside view comfortingly airy, thanks again to the tall driving position.

Another X3 trademark, the three individual rear seats, are present in the new X3. The seats can be folded in sections to increase the luggage room. From 550 litres the cargo can be expanded to 1,600 litres.

The X3 xDrive 20d is powered by a 2.0-litre four-cylinder diesel engine, with common-rail direct injection and turbochargers. The engine delivers an adequate 184 hp and 380 Nm from just 1,750 rpm. It 100 km/h in ten shaking, as X-C seconds, with a top speed of 210 km/h. The factory quotes a mileage of 17.2Km/litre using the European test cycle.

Helping to achieve such efficiency is the new Auto Start Stop system, which will automatically shut down the engine in traffic jams and at stop lights. It will instantly start up the engine again when unwind. The air-conditioning and electrical systems will of course continue to function.

An eight-speed automatic transmission makes the most of the diesel's torque. Drive is channelled to all four wheels via electronically controlled differentials. The system can also help minimize understeer and oversteer by directing torque to the appropriate wheel.

The X3 is produced at the company's Spartanburg, South Carolina plant, along with the X5 and X6. The latest of BMW's highly attractive crossovers will cost N1,495 million.

NOTES...Zeen at the launch were Centenary Properties chairman Arab Jerry E. K. Asemota, LCPE president Jerry Shenaking, Centenary Properties president Warren Asemota, UnionBank SVP Simeon Lagos, Dave Ezeobieako of IPI Family Auto Loans, Singapore Embassy Attache Richard Ong, First Filipinas president Rudy Concepcion and Miguel Real, consular and Consul General of the Republic of Argentina

ANGEL Sandra, Vicky Zakkiand Stephanie Zakkiand

Inspired by an unwillingness to compromise and a passion for benchmarks, the new BMW X3 combines class-defining roominess with exceptional elegance. Raw power with standards-setting economy. Aesthetic elegance with modern functionality. Now available with a new and more powerful engine and a whole range of BMW EfficientDynamics measures, this car has your name on it.

BMW EfficientDynamics
Less Emissions. More Driving Pleasure.

MOTORING

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E-mail: jr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph

Filling the gaps

From page B2-1

creased efficiency of the wiper system that provides much better visibility on heavy downpour, even at high speeds," said Jerlou Angeles.

3rd perception misconception: Airbag deployment

Some owners of vehicles equipped with a supplemental restraint system (SRS) such as airbags have expressed distrust that their airbags did not deploy when they met an accident. Hernandez explained that the deployment of the airbag depends on certain conditions, such as: 1. The vehicle must collide head on with a solid barrier or another vehicle; 2. The vehicle has reached the minimum required speed i.e. 40 kph; 3. The driver and front passenger are wearing their seat belts. Hernandez added that the airbags may also not deploy when: 1. The vehicle collides with a pole; 2. the vehicle falls into a ditch; 3. The vehicle was rear ended; 4. The vehicle rolls over; and 5. The vehicle hits a solid barrier at an oblique angle.

4th perception misconception: Hard-to-maintain parts

Owners of luxury vehicles have raised concerns on the proneness of their vehicles being "hard to find" and thus, hard to maintain. One particular material Jerlou Angeles cites is a ceramic type material used as rotary wheelhouse lining that is usually used only in the interior. Jerlou Angeles explained that the advantage of using this type of lining is that it improves noise insulation, and gives clear chimes. It took over-whelm subjected to heavy welding.

NOISY wipers are a perception misconception.

AIRBAG deployment depends on certain conditions.

DRIVE brakes minimize distance of a wheel locking.

ABS no installation is important.

5th perception misconception: The air recirculating system is malfunctioning

Jerlou Angeles shared that customers often complain of their Isuzu's cabin either being infiltrated by outside air, even if they had repeatedly switched to the recirculation mode.

"In Europe, there's a law that dictates that for every 30 minutes, you have to change the air within the cabin. There's a study that shows the driver tends to be sleepy when fresh air is not circulated in for more than 30 minutes. Stale' air has low oxygen, thus causing drowsiness especially on long drives. Thus, the law has been translated into automated air technology. The recirculating mode will automatically switch to outside ventilation after 30 minutes," explained Jerlou Angeles.

He added that even in recirculating mode, "only 70 percent of the air is restricted or reused, and 30 percent is fresh from the outside.

That's the EU law, and it is designed into the car that cannot be tampered with unless you're a re-assembly."

6th perception misconception: Build quality has 'softened'

Mercedes-Benz owners now remark that the build quality of their diesel silencers, suspensions and bushings aren't as tough and durable as they used to be.

Jerlou Angeles said that they had looked closer at the components in question and have found out that the quality of the parts, if not the same, were even stronger. But why were these parts being replaced earlier? "We noticed that with the improved suspension designs of newer models, drivers would now run over bumps and potholes and rugged roads at higher speeds.

"With older Isuzus, drivers would normally traverse the bumps a little bit slower. In effect, driving Isuzus over the same bumps subjects the newer ones to harder forces."

Just like a marriage. You can't undo love things all of the time.

BENZ brakes have optimized grip.

MITSUBISHI TO OPEN OZAMIZ SHOWROOM

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. (MMPC) and Para Bum Motor Philippines Corp. (PAPC) recently held the groundbreaking ceremony for the Isuzu dealership's another exclusive showroom and service center in Ozamiz City. MMPC First Vice President for Sales and Marketing Dante Santos and PAPC Chairman Victor Consuegra Jr. also in attendance were MMPC executives Pedro De Leonardo, Rogelio Trinidad, Mario Medina and Danilo Nemzo and PAPC executives Julio Montenegro, Rene Pore, Carlo Pagano and Rhoda Tiburon. Pagadian City Mayor Sammy Co also graced the occasion.

Ford Fiesta's True Love Challenge

FORD GROUP Philippines welcomes the month of hearts with kick off "The Standoff: Fiesta or True Love?" Facebook promotion. Fans of the Ford Fiesta in the Philippines Facebook page hope the chance to win an all-expense paid dinner for two at Kalaheni's Restaurant recently by answering this simple question, "Which would you rather have: The Ford Fiesta or True Love?". The most creative and imaginative answers wins!

"People have always joked about which they love more—their significant others or their cars. Well, this is the chance to prove it," says Steven Tan, Ford Group Philippines vice president for marketing and sales. "By giving away lovely dinners for two, The Standoff is meant to be an online contest that allows fans to celebrate romance through their love for their Fiesta's."

Submit all your entries now! Fans are encouraged to create up with the most clever or romantically-inclined comment on facebook for an opportunity to bring your loved one for that special Italian dinner. So what are you waiting for? Two weekly winners will be chosen every week for four weeks. Promo period is until March 31, 2011.

For more information, visit www.ford.com.ph for more details. Like us on Facebook by being a fan of the Ford Fiesta in the Philippines Page.

Defining one's lifestyle

By Charbel E. Bulan

WHEN GOING on a long road trip, you don't just need a ride with a reliable and powerful engine but one that is also comfortable as he is despite being stuck in the many hours.

Legroom should be ample and the suspension supple enough to soak up road vibrations. First of all, it should be spacious to be able to accommodate whatever things you need to bring with you to your destination.

Isuzu Philippines Corp. believed they have the right vehicle to fulfill all those requirements: Alterra Urban Cruiser.

In relaunching their enduring GUV model, IPC explained that the new name as well as the new tagline "For the Journey that Matters" embodies the Alterra Urban Cruiser's goal to provide only the best in comfort, space, luxury and to-an environment.

"For successful individuals, not all trips are ordinary," said IPC president Ryoji Yamazaki. "There are journeys in life particularly those taken with loved ones, that are truly significant and worth preparing for. These occasions demand only the best in the vehicle, which the Alterra Urban Cruiser could definitely provide."

The Alterra Urban Cruiser is powered by a tried-and-tested 2.5-liter CRDi turbocharged 4JJ1-TC 16-TEQ diesel engine. With a generous supply of torque and power, this engine enables the GUV to pamper its occupants and make every trip memorable.

New colors

For 2011, the Alterra Urban Cruiser has been given a new front and rear spoiler chins. New exterior colors have been added: Nautilus Blue for new, some variants, and Diamond Gray, Silky Pearl White, Sterling Silver and Starry Black for monotone units.

Inside, a high-tech entertainment system features a motorized 7-inch touch screen and the dealer-option 3-liter system. Legroom was also improved while ceiling-mounted air-conditioning vents, map lights, sunglass holders and second-row reading lamps are added.

To experience all these improvements, IPC recently organized a road trip-cum-motorcade-biking event with several members of the motoring media.

Called the "Isuzu Alterra Urban Cruiser the All-Terrain Challenge," the group headed to Pico de Loro Beach and Country Club in Nasugbu, Batangas.

The ride alone is already remarkable as the drive took around five hours along one of Batangas' lightly-traveled roads as well as through unbored and unpaved mountain route leading to the resort.

Sponsors

For this event, IPC partnered with Reebok, Orca, Thule, 199 Old Wood House and Unlad-Cadres formed units Technical Challenge," the group headed to Pico de Loro Beach and Country Club in Nasugbu, Batangas.

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Before the mountain biking event, the cyclists took their time up of four members of the motoring media) underwent a mountain bike clinic conducted by Cibo Multi Sport Boutique.

The three former taught the participants proper bicycle fit, some of the basic cornering principles for physical fitness, mountain bike handling skills, and how to safety ride correct. Next, they were showed how to assemble a mountain bike (proper installation of both wheels, tire inflation and proper mounting of brake levers and seat post). Each team was later required to assemble one as part of the competition.

For the riding part of the challenge, two members of each team did position time trials on a five-kilometer pavement course and a seven-kilometer dirt course.

"It was indeed a day filled with excitement. In the end, IPC was able to show the participants how the Alterra Urban Cruiser could be one's lifestyle vehicle. The SUV positively complements an individual or a family who likes to engage in sports, leisure outdoors and other adventures. We have also shown that the vehicle is also perfect for transporting mountain bikes, either with the use of bike racks or by just configuring the vehicle's spacious way," said Tamanaha.

He also added that the 2011 marketing campaign of the Isuzu Urban Cruiser will be based mainly on this idea as bike racks on the "For the Journey that Matters" tagline.

IPC SVP Art Balmadrid (right) flags off mountain bike event's first rider IPC SVP and VP for marketing Nobi Kato.

MOTORING

Editor Joey N. Arcano

BPI
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Lexus Hybrid Technology unmasked

KIA

Revel in cargo opulence and lavish interiors complementing the Carnival's sedan-like handling with the meticulous driving performance of its 2.9L CRDi engine. It's time you ride in luxury in the Kia Carnival.

Savoring the quiet power of Hybrid Technology

THE LUXURIOUS interior has high-tech features and a calming effect.

SOFT, comfortable, spacious leather seats for five, including driver.

2011 LEXUS RX450h hybrid SUV: the most road-globe

ON THE ROAD

Abdel Sevilla-Hernandez

SEE SUV0h as I got home in the evening of Jan. 28. I moved down in my 2011 clunk ride, only "Lexus RX450h at 140 kph on the Skyway. SUV green lights goes off" I turn on pleasantly surprised to discover that driving a hybrid sport utility vehicle at 140 kilometers per hour is a fuel-efficient way of driving.

As of this writing, the 2011 Lexus RX450h is the only full hybrid luxury SUV commercially available in this country. The test unit that Lotus Manila lent me was the part-time all-wheel-drive (AWD) model priced at P4.078 million. Both the front-wheel-drive (FWD) and AWD versions of the RX450h are powered by a 3.5 liter V6 engine coupled to the newest version of the Lexus Hybrid Drive, but while the FWD has two separate electric drive motors, the AWD has three—the third motor to power the rear wheels. An electronically controlled continuously variable transmission (CVT) is standard in both variants and peak output is rated at 295 hp @ 6,300 rpm with 317 Nm @ 4,700 rpm respectively.

A hybrid vehicle like the RX450h can run either with its gasoline engine alone or with its electric motors, although the latter work only at low speeds for short distances. Thus the hybrid's superior fuel efficiency compared to cars with gasoline-only engines. The US Environmental Protection Agency, after testing the RX450h AWD, found that it averages 29 miles per gallon (12.2 km per liter) in city/highway driving combined. That's better than any other SUV on the market, including the new Porsche Cayenne S hybrid which only nets 21 mpg (8.8 km per liter) in the city and 25 mpg (10.5 km per liter) in highway driving.

SECOND: The RX450h's ability to approach 48 km per hour in electric-only mode improves fuel economy, especially in stop-and-go city traffic and slow driving. This is where the RX450h is massively overkill, gliding forth on the road like a big, stable ghost. You must experience the thrill of pressing the start/stop push button of this SUV and then driving off to abandon it. Soon, in order to savor the quiet power of hybrid synergy drive technology.

However, when you speed up and the V6 engine takes over, it does get somewhat noisy although the transition between electric and gasoline power is hardly noticeable. Since the RX450h weighs 300 pounds more than the RX350, its gasoline-only sibling, it does not accelerate or handle as agilely. On the road, the RX450h is stable, well-planted and comfortable, and it has the satisfaction that comes with driving a more fuel-efficient, eco-friendly vehicle but not the adrenaline-pumping excitement of a fast, high-performance car. And yet it is delightful that the ECO green light comes on when you drive at highway speeds like 140 km per hour.

Those delightful high-speed episodes aside, the RX450h fulfills its hybrid-powered promise: to provide a (relatively) tranquil, comfortable, sedate ride for five persons with ultimate fuel frugality. The refined hybrid powertrain, compliant suspension (independent MacPherson strut up front, double wishbone at the rear with coil springs and stabilizers fore and aft), soft leather seats, spacious interior and excellent sound insulation including acoustic windshield glass, cocoon passengers from the harsh, nasty traffic conditions outside.

BALANCED: The engineers of Toyota's premium brand have succeeded in developing a second-generation hybrid crossover that offers a more balanced driving experience due to the additional output of the electric motors, the quick-reacting CVT gearbox and the firm, lithium-pedal-response LED headlamps with Adaptive Front Lighting System, power moonroof, electrochromic auto-dimming side mirrors with turn lamps and memory, a rear fog lamp, power trunk door with auto closer and 18-inch alloy wheels complete the architecture.

The cabin is impeccably fitted with upscale materials and features including wood interior trim, leather seats, plush, high-pile carpeting, power tilt/telescopic steering column with memory, dual-zone automatic aircon, 10-way power-adjustable driver and front passenger seats with power lumbar support, the 8-speaker Lexus Premium Sound System with mini-jack and USB port, smart entry key with push button start/stop, cruise control, leather-trimmed steering wheel with audio and display controls. Cargo space measures 40 cubic feet with all seats in use but increases to 68.1 cubic feet with the rear seats folded down.

Standard safety features are 10 airbags, ABS with EBD and Brake Assist, Vehicle Stability Control, traction control, clearance and reverse sensors, back-up camera and rain-sensing wipers.

Bottom line, the 2011 Lexus RX450h offers smooth, safe, comfy daily driving with unostentatious luxury and a quiet functionality that calms and reassures. But above all, class-leading fuel efficiency that will reduce your carbon footprint.

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.

THE INTERIOR carries a pleasingly ergonomic appearance complete with thick-rimmed steering wheel.

DRIVING select dial

SNEAK PEEK:

2011 Lexus CT200h

By Jason E. Ang

WOW! It is: Lexus new compact hatchback, with an expected twist: it's a hybrid. The CT200h is the first and only full hybrid in the premium compact segment, and as such, carries the core technology of Toyota Lexus, its hybrid drive.

Designer: The CT is reminiscent of Lexus' first generation IS. Like that IS, the new CT has some of the taut muscles and sharply creased sheetmetal. Its hatchback configuration lends it a more stylish appearance than a formal-looking sedan. The car's hood, tail-gate and bumper reinforcements are sculpted from aluminum to reduce weight.

The interior carries a pleasingly ergonomic appearance, complete with thick-rimmed steering wheel. There's an intriguing menu-like controller on the center console.

Engine and transmission: 1.8-liter inline-four gasoline engine equipped with 80 hp electric motor. Lexus uses Nickel-Metal Hydrid batteries in the CT200h, combined, the Lexus hybrid drive can deliver 134 hp, while still offering environmentary average fuel economy of 17.81 km/liter (according to the US EPA; the Toyota Prius nearly matches its EPA figure as the Lexus can probably do like-wise). The factory quotes a 0-100km/h time of about 9.0 seconds.

Like the Prius, the CT's engine uses an Atkinson combustion cycle. This technology delivers more torque at the expense of additional emissions. Since hybrids run on zero-emissions while in electric mode, the technology is appropriate to combine with the electric system.

Suspension: As the CT 200h is supposed to have a sportier character than the previous Lexus offerings, it is reportedly equipped with a stiffer suspension and a rigid body structure. MacPherson struts are up front, while a double wishbone setup is at the rear. The CT carries a unique lateral performance damper system to reduce body vibrations and improve steering feel.

Positioning: A sportier, more exclusive alternative to the already expensive Toyota Prius. The CT200h not offer a sportier driving feel courtesy of a driving select dial with economy, performance, and electric modes. Carlo Chiaquiero, Lexus Philippines marketing officer, says that "the difference is huge. You really feel the change in the way the car feels and handles. In sport mode, power delivery is better and steering is given more weight and feel, while 'Eco' mode delivers a more drive that really places the focus on fuel economy."

While the Prius is decidedly a sporty-looking car, the CT200h claims that it can offer a more entertaining drive. The company claims a very stiff body structure, which inevitably translates to more responsive handling. Lexus Philippines may also offer an F-Sport version with stiffer dampers for better handling.

The CT200h is expected to carry a full complement of active and passive safety features, including eight airbags, brake assist, traction assist, skid, traction control and stability control.

As for pricing, Lexus' marketing campaign will be released around selected models or Style Managers. The pop star will be part of Lexus' "Uniti Residential" marketing campaign. She will reportedly be given her own CT200h. When we met her informally with the Manager in the entertainment areas, the Lexus brand is extremely trying to reach a group of customers who were not there born previously or raised in the brand. Perhaps the CT200h, with its hatchback, twin duties, and (reportedly) more upscale driving behavior, will be an ideal car to bring more customers into the Lexus fold.

Well we hope. Whole who are just you first a car with hatchback-derived genetics?

THE HATCHBACK CT200h: should bring more customers into the Lexus fold.

THE CT is reminiscent of Lexus' first-generation IS.

Salute to outgoing Kia bossman Felix Mabilog

LAST WEEK, the motoring media and the industry as a whole said goodbye to a stalwart, a pillar of the industry who has seen the evolution, transformation, rise and almost complete fall, and thankfully back to the resurgence of the industry. Mr. Felix Mabilog, president of Columbian Motors Corporation, after a career that has spanned four decades, has decided to call it quits and hand over the reigns to a younger, more vibrant management team.

Kim I unfortunately didn't have the opportunity to work closely with Mr. Mabilog. He's quite a character, and I only met him just under a year ago. But his warmth, kindness and family-oriented values are things that will be missed by the industry. Past, and his habit of starting and ending almost every statement with the ever-used expression pu***ina*** which is integral to Mr. Mabilog's everyday vocabularies.

Friends and co-workers will agree that it's tough to get used to Mr. Mabilog's antics, but once you do, you'll find a gallant, humorous and family-centered man, which in my book, is always counted big very good.

But I'm not only writing about Mr. Mabilog. I'm writing because in his speech, he jokingly told all present that every car I review is always a good car. That's true for a variety of reasons. First and foremost is that almost all brand-new cars I've tested and reviewed, and the ones published in the motors are really good. There are lulers with technology that improves performance, safety, comfort and versatility of use, compared to say, cars of five years ago.

Secondly, I consider the intended use of the car and its intended market, before I write any review about it. The Toyota Vios and the Honda Freedom Turbo are both good examples of cars on the opposite ends of the spectrum, yet they represent their themselves well indeed.

The Toyota Vios is your basic, entry-level 3-box subcompact. It negotiates roads. It doesn't have the sporting pretensions of a fourth cut of the line, and doesn't promise like to go rally, and it's definitely doesn't have phenomenal BMW-like specific output. The Honda Jazz is a noodle on rough roads, and the interior reflects the price you paid for it. But I love it because the Vios expresses the everyday Filipino to be free and carefree. It's tough as nails, and I once remember crashing a Vios test unit against a wall to make the world a better place. Only I realized that I'd kill myself and the Vios will probably draw a bumper. It's tough as nails, or acquaintance as a hardass and reliable as stink and cancer. Forget saving it, think of it being a faithful dog, in a good way.

The Panasonic Turbo ranks of course. It's Indonesia according to some motoring hacks, and answers a question nobody dared ask: 'let I love it because it really is a sportscar with four doors. In just over a quarter mile, it'll accelerate to 200Km/h easily and with four people on board to share in the fun. / hornet. But find like James Bond; suave and debonair, it's in our Rarity.

Then there are cars which make fantastic financial sense. The Mitsubishi Montero Sport is an A-segment SUV let it addresses 130,000 units last year, with the new VGT-equipped variant being launched sometime next month because for what you get, it's actually, dare I say it, cheap! Note the comparison as all road-ability and interior space, not to mention ride and handling balance are there, but for the price, performance, power and the discounts Mitsubishi gives, most people dictated in line with the inside all.

Cars of today have advanced greatly. I remember our having to squeeze behind the wheel of a typical 5-segment hatchback sedan, unlike how I need to squeeze my belly behind the wheel of an MINI Tysons Corolla. Small cars can be really roomy allowing for some sexy-time action or better yet, easy prodigious amounts of cargo like the Jazz.

So you see Mr. Mabilog, all cars, including KIA's which you have helped build over the years, are far better, make more financial sense, and because of that, more desirable. Just look at the book!

Please email the author at: bachdat@yahoo.com

SKID MARKS

Bodet Sandoz

FELIX Mabilog (fourth from right) and his wife with members of the motoring media during a thanksgiving party at the Bacolod Club.

KIA Family Day
Before Service Clinic
Feb. 26-27, 2011 SM Manikina

MOTORING

Star-studded Golden Wheel awards slated

JOHNNY Tan

MOTO Ishe Glenn Ayalde

RACER Seulean Pharcelo

SUPERRIDER Mario Rosario

THE 28 (still by e-mail letter only for Philippine motorsports as the Golden Wheel Foundation steps to 8th Golden Wheel Annual Awards Night at the Pagcor Theater in Pasay City.

It will be more exciting than the past years in the form of the various motorsports disciplines will be depicting the highest achievers for the 2010 racing season —the Golden Wheel Driver of the Year award.

Champions of 21 racing disciplines—scooter, sidecar, underbone, superbikes, motocross, karting, rallye, rallycross, drifting, drifting, 4x4 off-road racing, speed touring and drag racing—will receive a Golden Wheel trophy and one of them will be lured with the highest honor for the night.

The initial set of nominees are from Santiago (scooter), Alaine Ivanick (underbone), Jonathan Gonzales (superbike), Ilyan Agustin (motocross), Jean Joshua Almeida (karting), Alex Perez (drifting), William Tan (speed touring), and Josephat Tan (drag racing).

Two lucky drivers are also coming to receive their Golden Wheel awards—Asian Karter of the Year Sean Gelael and Asian Junior Rookie of the Year Simon Sean Lorenzo.

The Golden Wheel Awards is a project held of PEP Motorsports Godfather Johnny Tan with a vision of seeing a Filipino champion in the world motorsports scene. Since its inception in 2003, the Golden Wheel Awards has grown not only as a prestigious awards body for motorsports in the country but also as the much-awaited and most glittery annual gathering of solid brotherhood among racing heroes and superbikers.

Much awaited in the event that one of the champions in the various disciplines of motorsports will be conferred the highest distinction in the Driver of the Year.

It's the most glittery as these racing personalities third themselves there every year, and their other side is formed as actor.

But more importantly, the Golden Wheel awards brought forth a spirit of unity among the drivers, organizers, sponsors, partners, media and supporters in a solid Racing Nation where populace share the common passion for speed and racing excellence.

The solidarity of the racing community will be put in the limelight as the 8th Golden Wheel Awards carries the theme "Conquering Speedlines in National Unity: One Vision, One Direction", emphasizing the collaboration effort towards the future of developing a Filipino world champion driver.

The solidarity was most evident last year as the racing community took steps to keep Philippine motorsports alive even as it hemorrhaged from economic difficulties.

Revived in 2009, Pinch-hitting teams implemented low-cost racing or what they call as "spirit racing" to come up with an equally successful and dramatically refueled racing season with the valuable support of San Miguel Corporation, Shell, Honda Parkwerx, Petron, Yokohama Tire Asia Philippines, Sol-J Pharma Corporation, STIFT, Suzuki Philippines, Glasspoint Flag, Inside Racing, PGA Cars Inc., and Arenaweb.

Motech Transpower and Pepsi-Blaster emerged as the first recipients of the coveted Golden Wheel Driver of the Year award for their unsurpassed feats in Asian karting and Asian Formula 3 championships in 2009. Runner-ups made it back-to-back in 2008 and were followed by Jake Jao (2006), Jody Canoy (2004), Mario Francis (2007) and Jonathan Tia (2008 and 2009).

Their four-champ-yet-won trend with the International Driver of the Year honors – Glenn Ayalde in 2008 for Asian series cross, Tyson Ty in 2008 for Asian Formula 3 and Jonhan Brian Ede (2007) and John Mark Lozada (2009) both for Asian karting.

This year's Golden Wheel could be a two-up between Jonathan Tia and Mario Francis. Tia is eyeing his third straight Golden Wheel Driver of the Year award after capturing an unprecedented seventh straight national drag racing crown while Francis, the strongest superbikes champion, could win the jackpot and for clinching a hat-trick-crown last season.

The other strong favorites are Glenn Ayalde for claiming his 12th career motocross division and Jackson Mercado for his third career Karter of the Year crown that equaled the feats of Ilyan Maurer and Edgen Dy Liacco.

Johnny Tan, through the Golden Wheel Foundation, has paved the way for the big development in Philippine Motorsports. From being a closed industry in the late 80's, Tan transformed Philippine Motorsports into one of the most watched Olympic sports in the country that boasts of a growing participation and popularity through the years.

He succeeded in pulling up solidly homologated race tracks to get it legal once out of the streets, and also organized competitive events that provided race-enthusiasts an avenue to mold and enhance their skills.

From the outsiders and makeshift tracks in Libis and Greenhills during the 70's, four-wheel racing are now staged in homologated racetracks in conformity with the standards of the Federation Internationale Automobile – Asia Automobile Philippines and the world governing body for motorsports – the Federation Internationale de Automobile (FIA).

From manual scoring, Tan brought in the technology of transponders for a more seamless, more precise system, where the car that crosses finish, the race winners can be distinguished by up to a micro-second difference apart. The system has also been used by the drivers to gauge how much they improved and how much they could push the limits of their machines.

Several racetracks sprouted from thereon, providing added challenge as how drivers can quickly adapt to the terrains of those courses that have become their favorite and where they have proven themselves equally competitive in the international arena.

Joining how Filipinos excelled against international challenge inspired Tan to discover and develop more racing heroes. Thus, the Golden Wheel Awards was born out of the vision of developing world-caliber drivers who will continue to carry on the achievements of two-time Asian Junior Champion Filipino drivers—Bodjie Izzard and Joey Hamoche.

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Chevy Motorama

February 18 to 20, 2011 SM Mall of Asia Music Hall

From February 18 to 20, 2011 Chevy invades SM Mall of Asia Music Hall for the biggest Chevy Motorama event of the year. Event highlights include the official launch of Chevrolet's newest car on offer, the Chevrolet Spark. Set for its public introduction on the 19th, the all-new Chevrolet Spark is expected to demonstrate to the public why it stands out in combining function with fun in one attractive package.

Guests on the 19th will also be treated to live performances by singer/performer, Karylle and a special guest appearance of Chevy brand ambassador, Ilyan agoncillo. Following the stellar performances and presentation of the Spark is a visual spectacle with this year's Philippine International Pyro Musical Olympics co-sponsored by Chevrolet Philippines - The Covenant Car Company, Inc. (TCCCI).

Car enthusiasts, don't let this opportunity of test-driving the latest Chevy vehicles pass you by. Not only is it possible to find the best Chevy that fits your lifestyle, but test driving a Chevy gives you a chance to try your luck at the Peel-a-Prize promo for more freebies that include fuel cards, exclusive Chevy merchandise, and special gifts such as Papa John's Pizza GCs, Transformers DVDs, Von Dutch shirts, magazine subscriptions and other cool prizes.

As you purchase your new Chevy car which comes with that Chevy prestige, Chevrolet Philippines - The Covenant Car Company, Inc. (TCCCI) adds a few extras to further sweeten the deal. For every purchase of a Chevy Cruze LT or LT or Chevy Aveo LT, you get an iPad or iPod Touch absolutely FREE.

The annual Motorama is a huge event for old and new Chevy enthusiasts. Even children and soon-to-be Chevy patrons will enjoy themselves as they pose and have their photos taken next to the 10-foot tall auto-robot that is another high spot of the event.

Participation and registration in the Chevy Motorama is FREE and open to all! Don't forget to tag along your friends or family and drop by to experience some Chevy love! See flyers or visit www.chevy.com.ph for more details.

The Chevy Motorama is supported by PHR magazine, Hobbiestock Collectibles, Papa John's Pizza, Power Mac, SM Mall of Asia, Solar Entertainment Corporation, Tuggup Philippines, United International Pictures and Von Dutch.

High targets for Hyundai in 2011

By Charlie Bahan

WITH RESURGENT climate appetite and various economic-friendly automotive-promoting further growth, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. remains very more determined to take its growth prospects up a notch.

"One big thanks to Filipino motorists who continue to buy post-car brand and what a stands for in the industry to the—it's a partner for mobility and an economic powerhouse, ready to make the business of automotive even more progressive for the country," announced Hara president and CEO Fe Jesus-Ayala.

Ayala is appreciative of the country's carbuyers after Hara's sales performance tallied a robust 18.4 percent growth based on January 2011 year-to-date sales.

Fresh from the outstanding 2010 sales performances of its Accent, Tucson Coupe, Getz, and Sonata, Hara continues the trend that year after it posted a 137 percent growth in its year-to-date sales in the PC segment.

Hot classic

Now considered a hot classic, thanks to its remarkable fuel efficiency and iconic yet powerful design features, the Accent continues to make waves in the auto sector proving its outstanding sales growth based on year-to-date figures. Taking into account that the Accent is the only brand to sought out since the model's debut, the Accent car's pioneering D4FB motor excellent sales performance this year.

Another strong model for Hara is hippie and boxier-looking Getz. This ultra-savvy hatch offers sensible interior as well as a powerful, yet fuel-efficient gasoline engine under a cool, lifelong headrest this January with a 63.5 percent growth.

Moreover, the Getz is registering confidence building month-to-date growth of 25 percent over its tallied sales in December last year.

Accolade

Another model that deserves much accolade for Hara is the new generation Tucson, touted as the year's International Car of the Year by Road and Travel Magazine.

This may have been the success why the Tucson are off the year rolls as amazing 13 percent month-to-date growth, complemented by much bigger results in the coming months for Hara in the mid-size sedan category.

Completing Hyundai's top seller is the Genesis Coupe sports car. Thanks to a 200 percent growth in its year-to-date sales and an amazing 200 percent month-to-date feat, the 2010 horsepower jewel only proves the model's resilience in embracing high performance driving.

Not only in the PC segment. Due to the showing excellent sales performance in the LCV segment with its Tucson, Santa Fe, and the iconic Grand Starex, which are considered among the most sought after models in the country today.

Remaining in Hara's flagship automobile is the Grand Starex passenger van, which ends out the year with a 46.5 percent growth.

Prior to its class-leading performance both on road and in the market, the Tucson conquered 308 posted a 79 percent month-to-date sales growth.

508 percent

After winning much admiration and support from many Filipino motorists in the Santa Fe, which delivered by Hara as a resounding 500 percent year-to-date growth.

MOTORING

Whatever happened to 'Car of the Year'?

By Alvin Sorella Mendoza

THE OTHER night at a dinner party, a friend asked me: "Whatever happened to the Car of the Year award? Is it still around?"

The question embarrassed me since I once was president of the Car Awards Group, Inc. (CAGI), the non-stock, non-profit organization of motoring journalists that institutionalized the Car of the Year (COTY) Philippines awards program. But my friend had reason to wonder whether CAGI and its main reason for being, COTY, were still alive since no information about them has been published lately.

CAGI was interpersonal in 2003 by motoring journalists from some of the major broadsheet newspapers and magazines in the country who aimed to choose, from a consumer's viewpoint, the best motor vehicles belonging in various categories in the market via subjective and technical road tests. The test scores were tabulated and then audited and reviewed by KPMG (the accounting firm, before the winners were announced and given trophies at the Car of the Year Awards Night.

From the start, CAGI maintained its independence and credibility by making it a policy not to accept sponsorships from car manufacturers and dealers. So either seven they required to pay admission fees to enter their products in COTY nor asked to participate in golf tournaments wherein the registration fee amounted to six figures. Instead, CAGI invited ad companies, telecom firms, tire, battery and car accessory manufacturers and PSDBs to the COTY gala nite via solicitation in cash or kind ("in deals.")

CAGI was able to begin its COTY program in 2003 because of cash sponsorships from the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) and Mobilfleet, the organizer of the Honda International Motor Invitational Shootout (HIMA.) In 2004, Petron came in as the biggest sponsor of COTY but this was not renewed the following year. 2005 was a particularly difficult year for CAGI in terms of sourcing funds to continue the COTY program. To find out how CAGI is coping, I interviewed Norman Lao, the managing partner of Speedkar and the technical editor of Top Gear Philippines who was elected president of CAGI last year after serving as the board as chairman of the testing committee since 2007.

Q. We haven't heard about COTY for some time. What is CAGI doing?

FL: CAGI will hold the COTY Awards Dinner on April 7 during the opening night of MIAS at the World Trade Center. But the COTY event will take place at the Philippine Trade Training Center at PITC located right beside the World Trade Center (connected to the World Trade Center). We are expecting to have the category winners displayed at MIAS during the four days of the auto show. Definitely, the Car of the Year will be displayed in the lobby of the World Trade Center for the duration of the MIAS.

Q. How many categories are there?

FL: Fifteen or sixteen, depending on whether a category will be dropped because there was only one entry for that category. As of now, we have the following: subcompacts, compacts, midsize sedans, premium midsize sedans, luxury sedans, sports cars/ sports sedans, minivans and small SUVs (multipurpose vehicles), vans and large SUVs, premium vans and SUVs, subcompact crossovers/ wagons, compact crossovers/ wagons, 4x2 and 4x4 midsize crossovers/ wagons, midsize SUVs, full size SUVs, 4x2 and 4x4 pickups.

Q. How are the cars tested, by whom and where?

FL: The testing is done by CAGI members and consists of two phases: subjective and technical. In the subjective test, CAGI members evaluate and rate the vehicles for seat fit, feel, looks, and fuel, then fill up a score sheet. The car manufacturers can send their representatives to answer questions from CAGI members during the road tests. Anyone can observe the subjective testing. However, only CAGI members with motor sport experience are allowed to conduct the technical testing at the Clark International Speedway, where acceleration, braking and handling are tested using the Race Logic Box. At the Clark speedway we finished the technical tests of 29 cars in two days, over a weekend or 16 plus cars per day.

Q. As the president of CAGI, what was the biggest problem you had to face?

FL: Like in the past, funding for COTY testing, activities and the awards night. Ideally we should have a budget of P2 million, but we're down to P2 million. A lot of the sponsorships, about 50 percent are exchange deals. We didn't receive a cash sponsorship this year. For 2010, some of our sponsors are: BMS, AAP for the logistics, Speedkar as technical sponsor, Clark Tires Inc. and Speedway Oil Spec, Rotec Depot, Mobilfleet, M.G. Madrid & Co. as auditor, Cubra for fuel coupons, Boeth, Bolt's ex Bumper, Winner Graphics.

Q. What are CAGI's plans for COTY next year?

FL: We want to improve the COTY testing to make them more informative and meaningful for consumers. Perhaps we can include fuel efficiency. Some many Chinese cars per liter, in the technical testing. A general membership meeting will be held after the awards night where CAGI members will be asked to offer suggestions on how to improve the testing. At present, CAGI has around 34 members from print, broadcast and online media but less than half of them are regular testing members. Actually, it's terrible to cancel two because they failed to participate in some of the COTY activities, particularly the testing.

PICKUPS, sedans and SUVS are readied for a scheduled testing by the COTY team.

www.volvocars.ph

Volvo Philippines

Volvo's Dynamic New Approach

VOLVO CARS — DESIGNED FOR PEOPLE, DRIVEN BY PEOPLE.

Harvey Angeles When I look for a car, I always aim for the perfect balance of performance and safety and with Volvo, I get the best of both. If you value your life, do what I did – choose Volvo.

Edwin Samuel Security and safety are main considerations when choosing a car, especially in these uncertain times. With Volvo, I get both. I have peace of mind which makes me enjoy my car more.

Kristy Fernandez Owning a Volvo is making the "Right CHOICE". Since I am the type of person who is very outgoing and loves to socialize, I am very confident that purchasing a national such as this also speaks of my character and gives a good impression to my friends and colleagues. The timeless compact shape, safety features and credibility of the brand are what I love most.

Chris Yu The XC60 is perfect for my active lifestyle because it is comfortable, spacious and powerful. By the way, it is also classy and stylish. I can't ask for more. :D

Ramon Ongsiu I am running a logistics company for one and a half decade now. Since then, I always make myself available for my clients. I will start my day with a luncheon meeting in Batangas City then proceed to Tarlac for another after-lunch appointment and will rush back to Manila to catch a meeting at Ortigas with another client. This is my typical daily schedule, which if I don't rely on the safety features and high technology engine performance of my first-ever European car, all these things are impossible to accomplish in one single day... that's why I love my Volvo!

Ina Tan I am an entrepreneur, reporter and a proud mom to 4 kids. I travel a lot. I drive fast and overtake a lot so I need an excellent and safe car. That's why I chose Volvo. My XC60 is smooth and elegant. Go easy, yet powerful. It won't let you down. I have driven a lot of cars, but my XC60 takes my breath away. I don't mind driving 24 hours straight with my XC60...it is simply the BEST!

VOLVO XC60

Discover the Volvo difference. Test drive a Volvo today.

Volvo Cars

Volvo and Safety

All CARS matter, as must the safety systems that they carry

By Jason Rig and Mirin Uy

"Cars don't drive by people. The guiding principle behind everything we make at Volvo, therefore, is and must remain, safety," so said Anna Gustafsson and Gunnar Larsson, the company's founders. As far as projects for car companies go, that is the best possible one. The company is such a rare find that it deserves nothing but words of full-scale automobiles. Using its extensive research and testing capability, the company has a host of state-of-the-art safety features, several unique to the brand.

The latest to have been introduced is city safety, which monitors the car's path and sounds a warning or even brakes the car if it senses that the vehicle is about to collide with an obstacle or pedestrian. We have seen cars that suggest taking a break after so-many-of minutes behind the wheel. Volvo's system does one better by comparing the driver's current behaviour and, if it deems it erratic, sounds an audible warning. The new Hill relaunches Active Bending Lights, which can expand the driver's vision range by 220 percent. The system controls the headlights in two with the steering wheel, to allow the driver to see into bends. Naturally, the system uses Xenon high-intensity discharge (HID) bulbs to provide more powerful beams. Other active safety features include a roll prevention system, which can help reduce rollovers by cutting power and selectively braking wheels, to stabilize the vehicle. This is especially appropriate for sedan vehicles like the S60 and S80. Then there are safety systems like ABS brakes and electronic stability control, which Volvo helped to pioneer.

As for accidents when crashes do

VOLVO helped develop ABS brakes and electronic stability control

SAFETY systems are in place to protect not just those inside the Volvo but pedestrians as well

The car is made safer even in the event of a side collision

take place, Volvo are ready to protect the passengers using another set of safety systems. Most important is the car's body structure, which is engineered to progressively collapse to dispense energy while maintaining the integrity of the passenger cell. Volvo uses example zones and reinforced passenger compartments, and has pioneered protection for side impacts. There can create more severe injuries, in the example space is much smaller. With the use of selective reinforcement and devices such as side airbags, the car is made safer even in the event of a side collision.

Volvo also actively promotes proper use of safety systems. One of the most useful automotive reminders we have attended in the current use of child restraint and child occupancy. Using their devices correctly gives a little peace of mind and gives the additional benefit of having little ones enjoy the ride, too.

As one reader, we mean the safety systems that their carry. Conscious of the devastation of accidents, Volvo's Safety Engineering C30 Electric vehicle that is assembly safe in a crash, they showed off the results in the recent March issues on International Auto Show (IAIAS), after all, batteries, obviously, and a fiscal impact can be an explosive situation, but Volvo is proudly looking into that aspect of safety as well.

A personal experience—a testimonial on Volvo's values of vehicular safety

Excellence in safety engineering speaks for itself

ONE OF THE writers of this story can personally relate to Volvo's commitment to safety engineering. Several years back, his son was, whose car was a pre-owned Volvo V70 figured in a very bad accident in the outskirts of Chicago, Illinois. The V70 was the first car given to his son who was about to graduate high school. Since the son only had a student license at that time and it was already early evening, the car was driven by the boy's dad. While driving home in a city in the local Hums De pot down in Homes, IL. Boy accidentally bumped into a large deer trying to cross the highway on a dark portion of the highway.

The impact didn't actually have a second damage but a large pickup truck was rushed the Volvo at full speed. (The driver was later found to have been in talking out the cellphone and did not respond quickly enough.) The impact was so severe that almost the entire trunk of the car cops was completely down. Fortunately, passer by informed the 911 to operator center and help immediately arrived. All the three passengers all walked away practically unharmed. The situation would have been different if the car did not have a safety crumple zone, reinforced bracing, airbags and the all-important 3-point seat belt. Undoubtedly that the deer, it had to be put down by the rescuing officers due to internal injuries sustained during the initial crash. That would be the only unavoidable fatality to be incident.

For automotive accessories, choosing a car may be based on functionality looks and the perhaps most importantly, the budget. When drops the mind to most into consumers is the fact that safety should be one of the most important considerations. Volvo's such account of excellence in safety engineering speaks for itself in this story.

Gadgets at stake in Honda's 'Jazz Live it Up' photo contest

COOL GADGETS are up for grabs in Honda Cars Philippines, Inc.'s "Jazz Live it Up" online photo contest.

Contest participants require just two years to simply capture the things that make them inside the Jazz and upload the photograph in www.facebook.com/hondajazz.

Sample scenes include setting up a kids' playground so even have a picnic inside the car during a family's out of town trip.

The possibilities are endless with the Honda Jazz.

With its surprisingly huge cabin space and versatile seat configurations, bring up a lifestyle is possible inside the Honda Jazz.

A short description of the photograph is required for every entry. The photograph that shows the most creative and most original idea wins.

Jazz Live it Up online photo contest runs until February 28.

The "Jazz Live it Up" contest shall award prizes to the three best photographs submitted.

The first prize winner will be awarded a Canon 12.1 while second and third prize winners shall receive an HP Mini 210 and HTC WildFire mobile phone, respectively.

Winners need to present a valid ID and printed email confirmation by Honda Cars Philippines, Inc. when claiming prizes.

Revolutionizing the concept of small cars, the Honda Jazz has continuous competition in terms of interior space and functionality such as versatile SURA seats. Powered by the i-VTEC engine, the Jazz also delivers outstanding fuel economy without sacrificing power or output.

Three amazing features make the Jazz the unbeatable choice of the media for Most Fuel Efficient and Most Functional Passenger Cabin for three times in a row during the Auto Focus Automobile of the Year Awards and 2010 Consumers' Choice of the Year during the Autodeal 07 Awards.

Loaded with numerous innovative technologies, it is no surprise that the Honda Jazz has gained worldwide popularity that reaches cumulative sales of over 3.5 million units since its debut in 2001.

Check out the Honda Jazz in any of 28 Honda dealerships nationwide.

Toyota 'I Love Savings' promo

TOYOTA MOTOR Philippines (TMP) opens up Valentine's month with the "I Love Savings" Promo from Feb. 3-28.

Celebrate the month of love with the country's top two best-selling vehicles, Vios and Innova, available through pre-loan, pay cash, pay light, pay easy, pay later schemes.

Pay Less, through Toyota Financial Services (TFS) transaction, offers low down payment of zero for as low as P60,000 for Vios 1.3E M/T and P79,500 for Innova J Gas variant. In addition, Pay Less customers are entitled to go all-in package inclusive of Free 1-year comprehensive insurance, free 3-year LTO registration and no chattel mortgage fee.

Pay Light offers low monthly plans for as low as P8,500 for Vios 1.3E M/T and P17,700 for Innova J Gas variant. Customers can also avail of 0 percent interest up to 18 months for selected variants.

Meanwhile, cash buyers can get instant savings of up to P40,000 for Vios and up to P58,000 for Innova when they avail of TMP cash rebates.

Having a hard time? Why choose when you can have both? Enjoy the affordability of low down payment and the convenience of low monthly amortization with the Pay Easy package. Drive home a brand-new Vios for as low as P90,000 deposit and P10,750 monthly amortization. The Pay Easy scheme is applicable to financing transactions with down payments from 14-20 percent and for terms of 24-36 months with a lump sum payment at the end of the term.

Also part of this promo is the Pay Later scheme where customers can make three fixed monthly installment 90 days after purchase. Most interestingly customers can avail of their new Vios or Innova for as low as 10 percent down payment only.

Lastly, as a way of showing gratitude to its customers, TMP also offers additional discounts to current owners of any Toyota vehicle. Avail of up to P30,000 loyalty discount for Vios and other selected models.

Phone to your nearest authorized dealership and full details with any of these exciting packages from Toyota.

Ford's Big Deal offers customers chance to win Escape or Ranger in raffle

FORD INDEPENDS welcomes 2011 with irresistible all-in low down payment schemes in The Big Deal Promo. Starting from extended to Feb. 28, 2011, Ford offers its customers the chance to drive away with a new Ford Escape or Ford Ranger with a P99,000 all-in low down payment. Customers must also opt to avail of the P149,000 all-in low down payment of the Ford Everest.

"We are absolutely encouraged by the customers' response to the BIG DEAL Promo. Ford dealerships across the nation have reported a rise in showroom traffic and the number of requests for test drives in the month of January. Heading into the Chinese New Year celebration in February, we had compelled to extend the promotion for another month so that our customers in the Chinese community can continue to enjoy the big savings in buying a Ford vehicle in February. There is no better time to grab into a Ford showroom," says Steven Tan, vice president for marketing and sales.

Customers can also opt to simply choose all-in down payment with the exclusive Ford Escape SUV (starts P99,000 ALL-IN, or a "Built Ford Tough" Ford Ranger from P99,000 ALL-IN, or the 0 (4.86) and spacious Ford Everest (P.N. to as P149,000 ALL-IN. Other Big Deal offers on other models are available in our showrooms. All-in down payment packages include free LTO Registration, 4-1 year Comprehensive Insurance and Chattel Mortgage, and no no-liability through Ford Motor Bank, but subject to credit approval.

Promo period has now been extended till the 28th of February 2011, so hurry and head on to the Ford dealership nearest you. To know more about the terms and conditions, you may visit any of the following 21 Ford dealerships and dealership showrooms all over the Philippines. Ford dealerships are located in Alabang, Balintawak, Commonwealth, Cubao, Global City, Lipa, Makati, Quezon Avenue and SM Novaliches. Ford-accredited dealerships are located in Batangas, Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Cavite, Cebu, Dagupan, Davao, Iloilo, Lipa, Pampanga, San Pablo, SM Marikina and Subic.

125th birthday of the horseless carriage

Celebrating some of the world's firsts in automotive history

By Alvin Uy

KARL BENZ patented the world's first automobile in January 1886. However, this horseless carriage did not generate much interest. In a fit of adventurism and without her husband's knowledge, Bertha Benz, with her sons Richard and Eugen, aged 14 and 15 years old, drove off with Benz's vehicle clubbed as the "Patent Motorwagen Number 3" from Mannheim to Pforzheim. On that brief all-day in August 1888, the land-sea-air trip conducted the world's first outpatient in history.

She actually wanted to prove to the public that driving in a "horseless carriage" is possible, safe and practical. Along the way, people were visibly frightened by the sight and sounds of the automobile, but accounts of this trip generated so much publicity that it allowed Carl Benz to pursue developing his project. Aside from this, Bertha's car drive gave Karl important insights on how to improve performance of the vehicle such as adding gears for inclined slopes to hill climbs.

Along the way, she had to make fuel stops and look for a solution (quite called "benzin," which was available only at dispensing chemist shops. In what can be considered as the world's first fuel filling station, a shop called Bhdt-Apotheke ("Bent Pharmacy") in Wiesloch, located a few kilometers south of Heidelberg, was the site where Bertha Benz made her first fuel stop. The store still exists up to this time. With typical flare ingraining Bertha Benz also had to use her long straight hair pin to clean a blocked fuel pipe and used a garter to insulate an exposed wire.

Bertha Benz's original route has been revisited countless times and it leads to one of the most attractive scenic regions in Germany called the Baden wine region. On its 120th anniversary, Karl and Bertha Benz's only surviving direct descendant, named Jutta Benz, retired several key dates to promote its 120th birthday by riding a faithful museum quality replica of the original patent car promoting the event. On the local front, GMS Motors Inc., distributors of Mercedes-Benz in the country, will have a year long celebration of this historic milestone starting with a party at the Open-Air Resort World on Feb 24.

KARL and Bertha Benz on one of the early models of the world's first automobile.

TRIVI-AL NOTES

By Alvin Uy

Milestones of the month

Mazda's Miata Zoom Zooms to another record

THE ICONIC Mazda MX-5 Miata continues to reinvent the automotive world as the best-selling two-seat roadster ever, reaching a new mile-stone of 900,000 units produced. Almost half, or a total of about 400,000 of those cars were added to the 100-odd times since the car was launched in 1989. It has been over two decades since the MX-5 made its global debut at the 1989 Chicago Auto Show and has undergone several facelifts and model changes. It has also garnered several "Car of the Year" and "Best Sports Car" awards as well. When the 900,000th Mazda MX-5 was rolled out of Hiroshima a few months back, it has effectively maintained its lead as the best-selling two-seat sports car in history, according to the Guinness Book of World Records. The Miata first earned its first win back in 2000 after surpassing 100,000 units.

"As we head toward the next production milestone of one million units, Mazda is committed to further evolving the MX-5," said Hiroki Kotini, Mazda Motor Corporation (MC) senior managing executive officer, research and development. "We will refine its fun-to-drive character as well as further enhance its environmental and safety capabilities. In the years ahead, we will continue to cherish the MX-5 alongside its loyal fan base as the symbol of the Miata brand."

1994 ELAN MX-5

60 and still fabulous—the Toyota Land Cruiser

The Toyota Land Cruiser celebrates 60 years of on-road and off-road history this year. Dubbed as "Hamba ka, Kaya" in Japanese, it carries a rich history as the top automotive brand's first foray into the four-wheel drive car market produced by Japanese car maker Toyota. The introduction of the first generation Land Cruiser began in 1951 with Toyota's interpretation of a jeep-like vehicle with convertible and slotted wagon as well as utility truck versions. It soon became popular for its economy reliability, albeit the roughest and toughest terrains with its full-size, body-on-frame, four-wheel drive platform. From the first generation 20 series, 40-series, 55-series, 70-series, 80-series, 90-series, 100-series to the all-new 200-series, the Land Cruiser has evolved to a luxury four-wheel drive vehicle with a version from luxury-mini SmartCruiser.

The 200-series Land Cruiser was launched in 2008 which shares the same platform as the Lexus LX570. Its body frame was an improved version

THE NEW (main photo) and the original Land Cruiser

from the second-generation Tundra model with a shorter and strengthened chassis. Despite sporting a badge of luxury thanks to strict customer-focus, the Land Cruiser remains GAZOO's vehicle of choice and is considered as a tough and serious off-roader, one garnering many rival brands in the market.

Reward your business with a brand new L300 through

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Sa halagang P63,000 downpayment may bagong L300 ka na!

Sagot namin 2 months amortization mo.
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LOW DOWN P63,000 P438.40

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MODELS	DP	MONTHLY AMORTIZATION			
		12	24	36	48
L300 CC Deluxe FB (Euro)	P63,000	P16,277	P15,494	P15,132	P15,040
L300 CC Deluxe FB (with Dual Airbags & Tipmeter)	P66,000	P16,914	P16,132	P15,771	P15,717
L300 CC Deluxe FB (Euro)	P67,000	P16,972	P16,629	P15,894	P15,847
L300 CC Deluxe FB (with Dual Airbags & Tipmeter)	P70,000	P17,289	P16,988	P16,627	P16,574

3 Years/100,000km WARRANTY

MOTORING

At Shell, P20 goes a long way

By Emman Cora

PEOPLE THE country knows for impending fare hikes in the middle of love months. Shell's Get P20 treat comes in a sweet gift for its loyal following—and it couldn't have come at a more perfect time.

From Feb. 15 until March 31, Shell customers are entitled to P20 worth of products from participating Shell Select or Shell Shops for every P1,000 single or accumulated purchases of Shell quality fuels. Getting rewarded is easy. Customers just need to present their original receipts at any participating Shell station to avail of the promo.

The Get P20 promo was received as a thank you gift to customers who remain steadfast in the company and for their overwhelming support.

"We want to thank our customers for their continuous support and patronage with a simple but tremendous treat through our partners," said Bong Padolina, Pilipinas Shell general manager for retail. "We are ready to serve our customers in our stations across Luzon and we want to enrich their refueling experience with this initiative," he added.

With Shell's accessible and strategically located stations across Luzon, motorists from all walks of life can take advantage of this offering.

For Elvie Genaci, a geologist and a student, Shell's Get P20 treats came handy at one point of her years as an avid Shell V-Power customer ever since she bought her first car. She shared a rather funny tale how she managed to refill her petrol-child's tummy in a Shell gas station.

"We were on our way to the airport to send off my daughter and grandson. The traffic was really bad and we were stuck. My grandson started having tantrums. It was a good thing we stopped by a Shell station to gas up. At that time, there was an ongoing Get P20 promo so we were able to buy goodies from Shell before were with it. That definitely saved the day," she related.

Her daughter breezed through the airport procedures which she could not have done had her grandson continued with his tantrums.

Value-added service

Genaci added that promos such as Shell's Get P20 are much appreciated value-added services to customers like her.

"Nowadays, moms like me are getting more and more insensitive to terms of handling the family budget. Almost everyone now is looking for discounts and perks. Considering our gasoline consumption per week, I could get a fairly substantial amount which can be used on items that my kids would normally buy like mineral water, snacks, biscuits or even toiletries."

"Every process of my day is spent inside the car so a lot of memories are actually built while we are in transit. Having a great experience while tanking up through promos like this can enhance more good memories while on the road," said Genaci.

With Shell's avowed offering, twenty pesos can go far by way—from the taxi drivers who might need a cup of coffee to wake him up during the late hours of the night, or the jeepney driver who needs some bottled water or hotdog for lunch, to the mom who might be looking for pasalubong for her kids.

"At Shell, we don't just give our customers quality fuels, but also relevant and useful value-added services and offers. Consider this as our blow out to all Filipino motorists," added Padolina.

Loyalty discount

Earlier, Shell expanded its Pinoy Pasalo Loyalty Rewards Programme to offer a P0.50 per liter discount on diesel fuel for jeeps and buses beginning Jan. 1 this year. This is in response to the call of the Department of Energy to cushion the impact of rising oil prices worldwide. The discount is made available to members of Shell's Pinoy Pasalo Loyalty Rewards Programme for public utility vehicle drivers and may be availed through Pinoy Pasalo Inter initially in 15 retail sites across Metro Manila.

The discount is among the various benefits of the expanded Pinoy Pasalo Loyalty Rewards Programme, which include rewards like free accident insurance and home appliances, among others, in exchange for points.

"For many years, Shell has been implementing various programs for the transport sector through lasting and sustainable means. The discount will be another way of providing support for the transport sector," Roberto "Bobby" Ramayo, Shell vice president for communications, said in an earlier interview.

In 2009, Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. (PSFI) partnered with the Public Transport Workers Foundation to provide scholarship and training programs for dependents of public utility vehicle drivers, operators and workers, under the programme Go Mo Itaas Ka Ti. Since then, over 100 scholars have graduated under the program.

SHELL employees troop in various stations in Metro Manila to welcome customers and thank them for their unwavering support.

"At Shell, we don't just give our customers quality fuels, but also relevant and useful value-added services and offers."

Special

MOTORING

Raising winners for Racing

Tuason Racing School comes of age with a banner 2010 season

By Francis Tj. Ochoa

HERE'S A thought: Take your precious 7-year-old and fasten him to the cockpit of a go kart built to hone the lasers.

"That will cause a little controversy," said JP Tuason, a host of daredevil mischief in his childhood that highlights the summer when he hit the word "little."

"We've got kiddie karts that can go 60 kilometers an hour, so that's quite fast for a young kid who's learning to drive for the first time," said Tuason. "But we're confident that if we show them the ropes, show them how it works, they'll learn how to drive."

"We" refers to JP and brother Mike plus 24 other instructors who've been doing this for 12 years now—putting kids in racing cockpits and teaching them to fine the accelerator to the hopes of turning motorsports into a glory machine for the country by clocking racers who can compete internationally.

And the Tuason Racing School has acquitted itself in that aspect.

It hasn't just taught kids—and even adults who want to reclaim a piece of their childhood—to race. It has grown super drivers from nothing and make them star for the TRS squad in racing series.

In fact, 2010 became a validation of TRS's drive for excellence.

Mike Tuason won the GT 300-class title for touring cars and the 2650 pro-am title in drifting, twin flatpack raked the touring cars' GT 135 class while stunter Nitoy tapped the PPGC race for touring cars.

Child wonder Enzo Ilustrisimo, on the other hand, won the mini ROK championship in karting.

"It was a fantastic year," JP admitted. "We were practically every time we entered."

The opposition should have noted coming.

Tuason Racing School have so many operated in prepping their drivers for big races. Drivers go through rigorous training sessions complete with safety lectures and are purely made capable of dominating races by the time they've sent off to represent TRS in big races.

"We have three modules for go karts, three modules for touring cars and one module for drifting and one module for formula cars.

The BIG DEAL

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Promo period EXTENDED: February 1 - 28, 2011

EASTWEST BANK

Ford

Feel the difference

TRS-Castrol wins big with Mazda BT-50 in Drift Championship

TRS took the next step with Mazda Philippines using the BT-50 4x4 pick-up powered by 3.0 Di Turbo Diesel Engine

DOTMILL, TRS modified BT-50 4x4 pick-up truck with a 3.0 Di Turbo Diesel Engine was just a novelty. For being the first pickup truck in the world to be able to competitively drift. The idea started out in 2009 when Tsuoon Racing School was venturing into drifting, a fast rising event in motorsports. TRS partnered with Mazda Philippines and with a BT-50 pick-up truck. TRS asked the support of Castrol Edge, Standard Insurance, Cebu Auto, K&N air filters, Oshiro by Ikeda Wheels, Streetlight Body kits, Ultra Racing, OMG Spirals, Dupcon, Steeroxy power, motolia partners O Magazine and Businessworld.

After some testing and lots of consultations with car owners, TRS decided to go on with the project. With the help of Andel Ilmen of Autocraft, TRS finally came up with a lowered pick up that could still accommodates 18-inch Ikeda Wheels with Goodyear Eagle F1 Asymmetric Tires.

Sidney Ang and Herman Lao of Speedlab took care of the engine modification, installing a stroker, a much bigger intercooler, pipings, and Garrett was attached in position which enabled the pickup to churn out 170 valued horsepower, a pretty good number for a diesel pickup truck. A 3-inch exhaust system and roll cage were also installed courtesy of Petrolff Performance Exhausts. On the first race of joining competition in 2009, the modified pickup had performed surprisingly well, qualifying in the Top-8.

The following year, as the competition got fiercer with the entry of more high-powered vehicles, TRS team drivers Mike Tuason and Ryan Ongpauk still dominated the six races of the year, thus making the pick up not just a novelty but a force of serious competitor. With high-speed drift tracks of Clark International Speedway added to the racing venue, the team thought they would be facing tough times ahead. However, it turned out to be the opposite as the pickup even recorded an entry speed of 98 kph before going sideways.

In the end, Mike Tuason and Ryan Ongpauk finished 1st and 2nd, respectively in the overall category of the 2nd round National Pro-AM Drift series. Other TRS drivers were consistent podium finishers, taking three 3rd place finishes in several legs of the competition, Says TRS president JP Tuason was impressed: "From the beginning, we knew this project was going to be technically challenging. However, in a span of one and a half years we have taken on a stock pickup and did the near impossible transform it into a champion drift vehicle."

TRS-Castrol team completes Drift and GT300 double

BARELY TWO years in the drifting scene, the TRS-Castrol Drift Team evolved into one of the top competitive teams following its brilliant performance in last year's Lastrol Drift Championship held at the Clark International Speedway.

After creating sensation as the world's first ever diesel-powered drifting pickup truck, the Mazda BT50 achieved bigger strides as multi-titled race driver Mike Tuason and Ryan Ongpauld steered their respective Mazda pickup in a 1-2 finish in the amateur division. The team was backed by sponsors Castrol, Mazda, Cebu Auto, Speedlab, Ikeda Wheels, Streetlight Bodykits, Magnet 8, Steeroxy Suites, Petrolff, OMG Oakley, Yupsi and O Magazine.

Tuason, who topped the qualifying round with a time 95 kph, captured the title while Ongpauld rose from third place in the qualifying round to finish second overall against rival formidable rivals Norman Agapo (who finished third) riding a Mazda Skyline sportscar).

With the victory Tuason was able to wrestle the overall lead in the amateur ranks, earning a total of 308 points or 23 points ahead of the second placer Agapo who tallied 285 points.

Ongpauld was third overall with 277.5 points beating Mark Nolan and celebrity Ryan Agoncillo who got 260 and 42.5 points, respectively.

"We're quite happy with the performance of the Mazda BT50 Drift Truck. The wins only proved its competitive quality that could go head to head with other featured cars," said Mike Tuason. TRS PFEst spectators.

MOTOR COMPANY:

Over a century of racing history

BY FORD, Henry Ford was a living name in the automobile long and much of the Detroit Driving Club in Michigan. The race followed in 1901 when a Ford 999 reached the Indiana Fairgrounds dirt track, clocking a then record speed of 90.8 kph. These race homes were released just a few years after Ford became a corporation and pioneered large-scale, industrial car manufacturing process. By late becoming one of the world's most prolific car manufacturers, Ford was already collecting wins in race tracks.

Over a hundred years later, Ford would go to not just one of the world's classiest brand but also an active advocate in the development and promotion of motorsports. It should be remembered that it was a Ford Lincoln that was the first ever Indian Grand National Race in 1909 and a Ford GT40 that became a three-peat legend at Le Mans in 2006, where the Ford Focus made its racing debut to a world rally car, it bagged the Manufacturer's Championship title. Ford was also responsible for bringing V8 engine power to its mass production in 1932. To date it is one of the four manufacturers for three of Marcel's major events, and was a supplier of engines to several major Indycar teams until 1984.

True to its racing heritage, Ford has built a comprehensive racing program that allows us to participate in three Soccer series, World Rally and NHRA events. Around the world, Ford Racing also has regional programs in touring car racing, drag racing and off-road racing. Beyond four-wheelers, Ford Racing is also involved with Motley-Davidson in its AMA Superbike racing program and still chairs-rather in America's Cup 12-meter yacht racing.

But why does Ford race in the first place?

Ford competes itself in racing excellence for something much higher and more meaningful than the need for speed. All the technology, engineering, and performance enhancements devised in racing is Ford's means of applying lessons learned on the tracks and roads of worldwide races to the development of automotive technology and improved safety and performance for the next motoring, consumer-level Ford vehicle. Ford embeds it's DNA in the name of technology and knowledge from speedway to driveway.

FORD Focus-TRS Team bags four trophies in GT race

MIKE Thuane heads the group for the Ford Focus-TRS Racing Team.

THE FORD Focus-TRS Racing Team wrapped up a successful 2010 season behind impressive driving performances of drivers Mike Thuane/Jacob, Bobby Hourigan and Ding Dizon.

The team bagged four titles on top of a runner-up and third-place finish in the final round as well as swept the overall top five spots in the GT125 division of the series of the 2010 Philippine GT Championship held at the world-class Clark International Speedway.

The winning team was composed by Ford Racing Canberra Insurance, SME Discovery Boilers, Coke Zero, Gokart, Ajinkis Auto-Glass, Business World, C1 Magazine, Petrosil, Dupont, Stockright Builders, Hino Racing, Speedlab, Toptul, Beta Wheels and Peugeot.

Bedpath, Hourigan and Dizon entered the Ford Focus-TRS Racing in a phenomenal 1-2-3 finish in the qualifier race of the GT125.

While lead driver Mike Thuane failed to rank up for this race because of injury, the multi-titled racer still bagged the overall victory runner-up trophy and the GT300 crown.

With Bedpath clinching the overall GT125 title, Dizon captures second place overall while Marcus Wong, the overall third place, Silmel MacDonald, Bobby Montoya and Hourigan finished top 4, 5 and 6.

"We left truly blessed with this harvest. This brings forth a new chapter in the championship tradition of Ford's superior technology and racing heritage and we look forward to more championships to the coming racing seasons," said Tanseo who is also the TRS VP for Technical and Operations.

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Raising winners for Racing

From page B4-1

how to handle life in the fast lane.

"We remember when we started, we were lucky to get up our sponsors' banners in the wee hours of the morning in preparation for an event," quipped JP Yuson the management team includes Mike's wife Brenda, plus a whole team of individuals who are passionate in maintaining the professionalism TRS is known for and granting the spurs.

In karting, the Yuson siblings got starters as young as five. And some are middle age guys who just love to race.

"You'll be surprised, the race school gets students of different ages. We also get guys and girls. The guys that come in and do the school are the guys who couldn't afford to race when they were young. And now they have their money, they're trying to fulfill their dreams," Yuson said.

"In the go karts the crowd is younger, but you'll see an old or guy there because they just want to go racing."

And those who enroll in the school get their money's worth.

"We're the only professional racing school in the country. We do a turn key solution. We provide the cars, equipment. So for us, safety is a prime concern. We've been doing this for 12 years and so far we haven't had major accidents.

"The touring car we have, it has a second brake pedal in the instructors side. We have instructors get into the cars when the students need to go faster," said Yuson.

THE Yuson siblings get starters as young as 5...But same are middle age guys who just love to race.

This also comes up with world-class methods of teaching, not limiting themselves to classroom lectures and hands-on driving instruction.

"We use a lot of power point presentations, videos, safety materials."

Of course, all it takes is a drive through Edsa and its less-drivers-turned-speed-junkies, inconsiderate cutting-lane and distracted drivers to make you wonder, is it worth teaching the Filipino to go overdrive?

Yuson thinks it isn't a problem.

"When we come to the school and we tell you how we try to teach you to drive the right way and safe way to the track so you know if the speed limit bites you, you do it in the circuit, not in the street," he assured. "When kids come in, we tell their parents are you sure you have things out go really wrong if you do stupid things on the street."

In fact, aside from JC Wilke and 12 other guys that "do narrow-types of training," TRS officials has guys who help out with road safety issues.

Road Safety

"Road safety for us is a corporate social responsibility that we do. On the weekends, we have cars out on the roadways and talk about how not to get into accidents. So are youth racing and road safety is about 4 to 5 thousand students every year."

And from those thousands of students emerge the nexus of the crop that get drafted to go Team TRS.

"They put a lot to some and race, I'll be honest with that," Yuson said. "It's a misconception to think that those are talented drivers who don't spend a thing when they're with TRS. But it's still cheaper than going out and buying your own equipment."

TRS eases the financial burden off its drivers by recruiting corporate sponsors to subsidize the costs.

"And we make sure those guys have no headaches coming into race," he promised.

"Most of our drivers are working and we train and they work regular jobs during the week. We provide the solution for them where in until Friday afternoon, they're at their office and they don't have to worry about their cars because they know when they show up Saturday morning at the track their cars are already.

"Then we just jump into their seats and off they go," Yuson explained.

We have the machinery to support that. We have the engineers and everyone who work together. And yes, they grow their own racers from the grassroots.

We don't get guys to race for our team. Everyone who races for us has been taught from scratch. Everybody in the circuit to the school are potential drivers for us."

Proper Training

TRS schools drivers by their talent, reasonability and skill. "We're also looking at discipline. Guys who go out at night and drink a lot are not the type we need," said Yuson.

And with proper training, the Yussons believe that they can create a clear career path for young hopefuls.

"We have kids now coming abroad like the Bumgarner siblings (Michele and Mark) who are now doing Indy Lights in the US. That's the last step before they get to Indy cars. They're forging the way for young kids in Indies. Marlon Stockinger, he's now racing in Europe. And he's now doing GP3, which is one step away from F1. It's amazing," beamed Yuson.

But Yuson's is realist and he doesn't create false hope where there is none.

"We tell them if you're interested, come in the data first. At the end of the class and they sit in exam, our athletic coach overlook. We're very honest with them. If they have potential, we tell them. If they need more practice, we tell them. If they need to pick another sport, we tell them."

But even if he has to persuasively handle coach and every kid to achieve TRS' goal of making motorsports really big in the country, JP will do so wholeheartedly. And parents who want their kids to try out racing need not hesitate to put their young ones to TRS's care.

JP Yuson, for one, is a father to a 10-year-old kid who's about to start karting soon. And being a father gives him a different perspective when coaching kids.

"I definitely wouldn't put my students in a risky situation that I wouldn't put my own child in," he said.

"Our goal is to grow motorsports. But to grow motorsports, it needs to be done properly. If you let just anybody jump into a kitkit, there it will fall apart just as quickly," said Yuson.

So grow race is given to every child—and adult for that matter—who possess enough fire-doses of TRS.

After all, that's how Yuson Racing School has been growing winners the past 12 years. It is how TRS will continue to produce champion drivers to the years to come.

These High Performance Cars Chose

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Tuason Racing School: Champions made here

TUASON RACING School, the longest running professional racing school in the country kept the tradition of making champions in 2010. The bounty of accomplishments posted in just before 2010 ended and the blessings overflowed at the start of the year to cap what has been a successful season for the country's premiere race car driver training and racing team.

After 12 years of operations, TRS has shown what it takes to be one of the dominant forces in motorsports ... a lot of hard work, big support from partners like Red Racing, Mazda, Castrol, Standard Insurance, OMC Discovery Suites, Cebu Toys, Dudley, Agusta Auto Glass, DC shoes, 3M, BusinessWorld, CARmazing, Personal, Diagnostic, Manhattan Bagels, Ultra Racing, Speedlab, Toptal, Rain Wheels and K&N Filters, and passion to grow Philippine Motorsports.

Aside from its much sought Circuit car racing classes and karting, the Tuason Racing School hopes 2011 will also bring to be another banner year as it gears for bigger feats in Lateral Drifting, the Philippine Touring Car Championship, GT Championship, National Karting Championships.

"We really believe that motorsports is for Pinoys and not for foreigners all-out in making sure more Filipinos will have access to the sport this 2011, through more grassroots programs we will be implementing this year," said JP Tuason, multi-awarded race car driver and TRS president. "We want to discover our wonderful capabilities being race car drivers to the next generation," he added.

TRS is headed by the progeny of one of the pioneer racing families in the Philippines. Multi-awarded race car drivers JP and Mike Tuason, sons of racing legend Arthur Tuason, along with their wives, Jeanette and Brenda, share an unpassioned vision to develop two-seaters as a choice career where 10 spaces are enrolled internationally.

Each has undergone rewards and training from top racing schools around the likes of Skip Barber, Richard Petty, Michael Andretti and Bob Bondurant. The brothers also boast a successful career in karting, touring cars, rallying and Formula 3 racing, and have competed extensively both locally and abroad.

The school offers instruction in go-karts, circuit car racing, formula car and drifting. It is the only racing school that offers race training complexes with professional instructors, state of the art equipment, race prepared vehicles, and a scientific teaching curriculum designed from 21 years of racing experience and training with the best racing schools in the world.

Its effective racing class modules, discovery search programs and hands-on management of talents were proven once more as Tuason Racing School clinched five overall plums in major motorsports events last year—the Mitsubishi Challenge Cup Karting, GT 125, GT 300 and Philippine Production Car Championships for Touring Car, and the Pro Am Lateral Drift Competition.

Our vision is to make the country the training hub in the region. With this we keep ourselves, curriculum and technology up to date with all the racing schools around the world.

Founder and CEO of Tuason Racing School and TRS Driver Development Academy (DDA) JP Tuason has been involved in the motorsports and automotive industry for over 22 years. He understands the challenges and excitement of racing. He has been racing with three local karting championships and representing the Philippines in numerous international events including the World Finals in Japan and Egypt.

JP moved on to compete in rallycross and touring cars. Several more titles followed including the novice driver of the year award. JP then made the jump to Formula cars, backed by Toyota and Big Horse. This successful step up produced numerous podium finishes and wins at the Shell Filtrone Grand Prix in the Philippines and the Asian Formula Challenge in China. In 2005, at age 27, JP broke through to formula 3 and has been a regular in the Asian formula 3 series competing in Japan, Malaysia, China, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. In 2006 and 2008 he won the races in China and Philippine F3 races.

A firm believer in the continuous pursuit of knowledge, JP has attended top racing schools in the US where he received advanced instruction from world famous instructors such as Skip Barber Racing School, Richard Petty Driving and Michael Andretti Speed Lab. His training and knowledge led to the vision and successful installation of the Tuason Racing School.

Another aspect of JP's motoring career is in promoting Road Safety and Defensive Driving. Over the last eight years JP has trained with the US National Safety Council on Defensive Driving, Luxembourg National Driving Academy and the Prospect Road and Rally School. JP gained valuable experience working with Ford Philippines, its dealerships and local insurance companies. Over 20,000 participants have attended driver training seminars he's held in 20 in the last eight years.

Prior to founding the Tuason Racing School, JP began his corporate career as vice president for marketing for Mint Colour Systems, a company specializing in providing European automotive paint and industrial and paint contracting services. His customers included more than 20 automotive manufacturers and dealers, including Toyota Quezon City, Honda Makati, Ford Balintawak and Volvo Makati. In 1998, Mint was acquired by ABC-Nobel, a multi-billion dollar Dutch company. At Nobel Philippines, JP was national sales manager until 2002, where he was responsible for business development, managing a staff of 14 and 23 customers.

JP graduated from De La Salle University with a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering. He has been married for 10 years to Jeanette Tuason. She was President for TRS & DDA for Marketing and Business Development. They have 2 kids, Arthur, 10 and Alysha, 5.

MIKE TUASON: Vice President of Operations

Mike Tuason is the Vice President of Operations and a professional racer for 17 years. have joined several racing events such as Karting 1995 to 2005, Cadet Champion 1995,96, IGS Champion 1997, Shell Mid Challenge Champion 2001, Touring Cars 1998 to present, PTOC Champion Class B 2008, Formula Tuason 1999-2001, Asian formula 3 2004-2005.

He considers the 1997 La Salle as to win an international kart race , the 2008 Touring Car Races in the only closed race car in the 09th and the 2009 Lateral Drift Race held in Clark as his most unforgettable races.

However as a race school leader Mike Tuason learned that you need to be able to communicate to the students and discuss things in a simple manner because you have nothing in mind that they are not ready for. Be well of understanding compared to his experiences. He has also become more mature and confident because of all the titles, successes and experience under his belt.

As the VP of Operations he thinks sure all the equipment is working properly and has a capable pit crew. Every event to ensure everything runs smoothly before race starts. Unforgettable moment for Mike was with his father, Arthur Tuason who always supported them with their racing career, without him we wouldn't be where we are today. Thanks to him whatever sacrifices he gave respect for each other.

MIKE, JP and Arthur Tuason

Escalante puts icing on TRS cake with Mini-ROK crown at Carmona Racetrack

A YEAR of training under the Tuason Racing School (TRS) Racing Career Management Program produced big results for Rank Insulator who recently bagged the overall Mini-ROK title crown in the 2010 Magnolia Powwaw Karting Super Series at the Carmona Racetrack.

It was one dramatic climax for the 16-year-old De La Salle-Dasmariñas student who went through the struggles during with his rivals as the lead constantly changed throughout the 15-lap Final race.

But the lessons he learned from the TRS-RCM program helped him cope up with the pressures to capture his first racing career crown with the big support of Tuason Racing School, BeadyBlues, OMP and his individual sponsors Audi, Transnational Diesel Tech Group, Worldwide Automotive Corp., Bridgestone, Puma, Cebu Toys, Castrol, Bank of Commerce, Tescon, Rhevvies and Washington Watches.

He concluded his title quest with a total of 498.3 points.

"Yeah's championship feat is also a big success for the TRS Racing Career Management Program and our thrust for Philippine drivers for the purpose of producing a world-class champion," said Mike Tuason, the TRS Vice president for Technical and Operations.

"One year into the program, Rank actually surpassed our expectations as he has shown better maturity and competitive driving skills. He really has come of age and we expect him to achieve bigger celebrations as he moves up to higher classes in the coming seasons," he added.

Prior to the championship leg, he was enjoying a 10-point lead with a total of 396 points but was trimmed down to just seven after finishing second only to the qualifying heat.

But the determined Escalante put up a good fight to the last two races, particularly to the finish race where all the drivers could hold of the lead at one time or another.

Rank regained the top spot with four laps to go but the struggle got harder with the surging Gael Dilling-ham just close behind him.

But defensive driving kept him in control of the lead as he wrapped up the 15-lap race in 12 minutes and 52.360 seconds to just a hair-line 0.830 of a second ahead of Dilling-ham.

"It was one scary close fight, but the lessons I learned from coach Mike (Tuason) really helped me focus better in the race," related Rank, son of ion of famed governor, entrepreneur, Chef Tony Boy and Agnes Escalante.

The TRS Racing Career Management Program, patterned after the successful programs of Formula One drivers, was designed by the brothers JP and Mike Tuason who are both multi-disciplined racers and champions. It is aimed at helping young racers achieve a successful career path in motorsports.

"We have partnerships in Asia, US and Europe for our trainees to show on after they go through the available programs we have here in the countries. We also arrange matchings and experiences all around the world for them to experience the level of competition in the global arena," explained TRS President JP Tuason.

For further details on the TRS Racing Career Management Program, interested parties may contact info@tuasonracing.com or visit http://www.tuasonracing.com/ or call 817.7795 for inquiries.

CEBU TOYS Eight-track race-car driver, Escalante garners 1st title win

RAZZI Escalante: Surpassing expectations

Raising winners . . .

From page B5-1

single season," Tuason said.

Twelve years ago, nobody could have predicted this is where TRS would be right now. In fact, nobody even knew whether there'd be a TRS.

"In 1999, I had been out of school for about three years already and I was working for a multinational chemical company and it was getting to a point where I was seriously thinking about going to the UK because everybody looks to moving to the US to have a luxurious life there," Tuason revealed.

"But we didn't know anybody in the US, we had little family there so I figured all I'd end up with is a mediocre job. Our lives weren't looking that very bright with that choice. So we decided to go into business and see how it goes."

The Tuason brothers spent the remaining amount of money that they had—"it wasn't a lot," JP said—and entered themselves at the world's biggest racing school, Skip Barber Racing.

"They're very big in North America and we took home the coaching methodology and we started our race school and here," added JP.

"Our first year, we were lucky enough to get corporate sponsorship from a local company and we trained 250 friends. That's how we started. We had a karting friends for friends.

It was an okay start for the siblings and they decided to stay the course for the next two years.

"After that, we said, hahalo na, we'll see if we can grow this."

And they did. The brothers, plus JP's wife Jeanette, has expanded from a mere karting school to teaching people race cars. In 2003, TRS hooked up with Ford and the rest—as well as the opposition—was history.

Today, TRS teaches enthusiasts of all ages

MORE IN B6-1

2010 Philippine Production Car Championship

2010 Philippine Grand Touring Car Championship GT 2WD Class

Karting Super Series Mini ROK Class

CONGRATULATIONS

TUASON RACING SCHOOL RACING TEAM

GEARBOX™

The gear lovers of performance machines blend the elegance of precision with the art of aviation. Oakley GEARBOX™ is inspired by that intimate beauty and the craftsmanship that makes it possible. This timepiece evokes mechanical engineering with the precision of Swiss movement in a sculpture of stainless steel.

GEARBOX features five-jewel quartz movement and a uniquely dimensional dial face. Hand-forged stainless steel is toned with computer-numerically controlled machining and matched with a screw-down crown, placed on the left of the chassis for a distinctive look. A durable strap of UltraSilicone® rubber offers all-day comfort. This Oakley original is optimized with the protection of a pure sapphire crystal and the endurance of a 50-month battery.

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Versace designs 'highly collectible' condos in Manila

The new property is predicted to sell with 'high network,' rich Filipinos in search of 'aspirational' products

By Abe T Vergara

CENTURY PROPERTIES Group, the real estate developer behind Essenza East Forbes, and Versace have joined forces to come up with the first "luxury" residential condominium in Asia, with public spaces and interiors designed by the Italian designer brand's home division.

Slated for completion in 2015, the 53-floor Milano Residences will rise in Century City on Kalayaan Avenue in Makati (the former site of International School). It will join Century Group's earlier condominium projects in the area, dubbed by some as the financial district's last remaining premium piece of real estate, along with the Gramercy and Knightsbridge.

Considered by developers as "highly collectible" real estate, the Milano Residences has 158 or so units with one- to three-bedroom configurations. Public areas to be designed and furnished with furniture and fixtures from Versace Home to elude the building's main lobby

VERSACE C5

Losing Weight the Healthy Way with Kankunis Tea

Manila, Philippines – February 7, 2011 – An effective way to weight healthily is by drinking **Kankunis Tea**. It is proven to speed up the metabolism and lessen cholesterol in the body. It's good for digestion and losing unwanted fats. For 28 years, it is the leader in the stevia related slimming tea in the country.

Lucia de Guzman, a 47- year old bank executive, a Kankunis drinker attests to the beneficial effects of the herbal tea. "I have been drinking Kankunis for several years now. My friends introduced me to it and I can now slim and fit like mine. Truly enough, it gives me more energy and confidence that is beyond stress and overworked me. My blood pressure became regular and I lost unwanted fats. After seeing the good side effects of Kankunis, my daughter was inspired to drink it also regularly".

Diana de Guzman, Lucia's daughter, says she was inspired by her mom's slim and fit body because of drinking Kankunis regularly. " It helps me any by its healthy way, moreover, my menstrual cycle became regular when I began drinking Kankunis. Before, my monthly period was really irregular. It's a good thing my mom is drinking this tea for several years now and I see the good effect of her on her that's why I decided to drink it as well every day. Thanks Kankunis.

Kankunis Tea is good for those who are overfatted, want to lose weight the healthy way and has irregular menstrual cycle. It's safe, affordable and available at all leading supermarkets and drugstores.

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VERSACE Home lends a touch of modern Italian to this sit-mantined and minimalist dining room showcase in one of Milano Residences' model units.

SLEIGH bed is dramatic eaters and the Versace garment-in-motif give this bedroom an elegant but no-frills hotel feel.

MODEL unit of Milano Residences, signature address in Century City

Versace designs 'highly collectible' condos in Manila

From page C1

hallways, lounge, library, garden, spa and pool area.

And since Versace is synonymous with fashion, the brand's home collection takes inspiration from key elements in its ready-to-wear collections.

Overall 'signature'

According to press material, the Versace Greek key motif, made more contemporary by creative director Donatella herself, is the overall "signature" for the building's interiors, prominently those in the lobby, walkways and pool areas.

Century Group's engineers and resident architects will work closely with people from Versace Home to turn the vision into reality. Future residents who wish to mirror the Versace look and lifestyle in their homes can do so, as the company will also make its fashion-inspired home items available to them.

Milano Residences follows in the heels of an endless agreement forged by Versace with real estate developers from Beirut. The Damac Towers is the second luxury residential project to rise in the Middle East after the completion of Palazzo Versace Dubai, one of the biggest and most exclusive projects of its kind in the region, later this year.

Formal ambassador to China Jose E.B. Antonio and son Pedrito Antonio, chair and managing director of Century Group, respectively, led in the groundbreaking ceremony that was followed by a media conference in the lobby of Pacific Star building. The groundbreaker is also project head of Milano Residences.

Santo Versace, Antonello's elder brother and the company's chair and president, was unable to grace the launch. In his place was Gian Giacomo Ferraris, Versace's chief executive officer.

Based on Century Group's earlier experience with Emerson, arguably one of the best residential condominiums in the country today, the elder Antonio is confident that there is a market for Makati's brand of luxury (reportedly priced at P120,000 per square meter).

"We launched Emerson, the first condominium development in the area, in 1996," said Antonio. "At the time, people were saying we were crazy that every of $1 million per unit... it was overridden."

Status in life

The growing number of Filipinos entering the middle class, he said, is also bound to push the number of "high network" or extremely rich Filipinos wanting to get their hands on "aspirational" products, from expensive cars to homes. People, he added, generally like to position themselves at a level that describes their status in life.

"With the philosophy and having a passionate design that would go with the Milano Residences, we're confident that this project will be a huge success," Antonio said. "Compared to other Asian countries, our prices are actually cheaper. We offer the best expression of luxury compared to others in the region."

For his part, Ferraris welcomed and acknowledged the development as part of Versace Home's continuing efforts to expand globally.

"As a global brand with plenty of experience overseas, our mission is to grow the company," he said. "Clearly, Asia is a region we can't ignore. Moving to Manila is a clear step in this direction."

He also pointed out that the partnership between the two companies, in the younger Antonio's words, was forged earlier in Milan not in Manila, but in New York City where Century Properties also did a major project, said to be one of the most expensive buildings in America at $3,000 per square foot.

"We're the only Philippine developer with a project which received two continents," he said. "During that time, we met a lot of leading architects and officials from major brands, including managers from Versace."

After a series of talks, the Antonios were able to convince people from Versace Home, including eventually Santo Versace, to look into the Philippines to then had to expand globally.

"We've very proud of the fact that Versace has chosen Manila as the first city in Asia to have the first Versace interior designed building," said the younger Antonio.

Hours before the launch, the executive gave Ferraris a tour of the Ayala Center and Makati's upscale shops. Ferraris, said the elder Antonio, felt "comfortable" with Manila's fashion scene. He also shared his possibility of Versace opening its first exclusive fashion boutique in Manila soon.

FURNITURE pieces in contrasting neutral shades are redone by Versace Home's design team in the distinct quilting.

CENTURY Properties' Jose E.B. Antonio and son Pedrito Antonio, chair and managing director, respectively, with Gian Giacomo Ferraris (left), Versace's CEO

WHITE-painted chairs are somewhat feminine to their once sharp lines and angles in Milano Residences' banquet dining area, controlled monochromatic.

MASTER BEDROOM in one of the units.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Mauricio Arcache

MAURICE Arcache's column will appear tomorrow instead, Feb. 17, Thursday.

Macau booth showcases new look at Travel Expo

VISITORS TO the 2011 Travel Tour Expo, Feb. 18-20, will witness Macau's liveliest, vibrant and exciting look.

With the theme "Cities and Metaverses Macau," the colorful booth will showcase latest developments in the city as it continues to highlight heritage sites that have become major tourist draws. The new additions to the city's popular attractions include The House of Dancing Water, Panda Pavilion and Cirque du Soleil's new version of "ZAIA."

The singer of the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) Philippines, "Experience Macau," will be incorporated in the booth's design, which will feature soft walkers and human statues. Exhibit staff will be wearing Portuguese and Chinese costumes, reminding visitors that Macau is a blend of two very rich and exciting cultures, from the West and East.

Expo visitors can have their pictures taken with the costumed staff members, free of charge.

Local travel agencies offering very affordable Macau Tour Packages will be distributing promotional materials. Those who will purchase these packages during the Expo will receive Macau souvenir items from the MGTO-exclusive gift items for their choice. Travel trade members from Macau will also be around to meet with their Philippine counterparts, to possible liaison and business arrangements. E-mail mgtophil@info.com.ph.

Orchid and garden show

The Philippine Orchid Society will hold its 45th annual Orchid and Garden show at the Quezon Memorial Circle, Elliptical Road, QC, Feb. 24-March 1 with the theme "Green Living with Orchids." The show will feature landscape exhibits, orchid and plant competitions, demonstrations and commercial trade fair for inside propagation, orchids and garden products. Call 8764425 or 0917-8864868.

How my daughter found . . .

From page A14

trust that God will now lead me.

I thank the Lord for giving me the ability to draw and paint. As a Fine Arts graduate majoring in Interior Design, I am able to reach my daughter through the talent He has given me. Home schooling a child is very challenging, what more one who is deaf, mute, and has Down Syndrome! Yet for her to understand what I am teaching, I have to draw everything. I had no other way to reach her except through pictures and signs.

I was delighted to discover Clarissa's artistic ability at age 11; she started copying my drawings of trees and savanna, and drew realistic portraits of family members and friends. Believe it or not, others have said these portraits are reminiscent of Picasso! She uses vibrant colors, and the color combination she chooses are amazing.

Clarissa is also a lifetime scholar of Gilah Arnoach by teacher Nick Calma, who helps hone her talents. Both teacher Nick and I make collaborative paintings of Chabon's stories. Our walls at home have become a mini gallery of my daughter's oil pastel and acrylic paintings. She is truly gifted!

God is good. Clarissa cannot hear or speak, but He gave her eyes to see colors and hands to paint faces. Truly, with God, all things are possible.

Abda Rongcon Ortiz is author of the book "Embracing God's Purpose for My Special Child."

An exciting world of creativity and talent will once again unfold in a place most loved by kids. This coming summer, Jollibee — the leading fast-food chain in the country — brings fun, excitement and learning with the Jollibee Kids Club (JKC) Kid Scout program.

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Jollibee Kids Club believes in helping hands, parents in creating role on the best they can be through creative activities such as the Jollibee Kid Scout program. Parents of non-JKC members can sign up their child for a JKC membership to avail Jollibee promos. For inquiries, call

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YOUNG artist at work

How my daughter found her voice in art

By Malu Tuason-Ortiz
Contributor

My daughter is deaf, mute and has Down Syndrome—but she paints the most wonderful pictures

CLARISSA TUASON-ORTIZ is a young adult with Down Syndrome, who is also deaf, mute, chronically handicapped, and bipolar. When she was 18, I started homeschooling her because I wanted her to be as well as she could academically and still enjoy life without the undue pressure of competition, either with regular kids out there in the world or with her peers in special education programs.

I believe parents are the best teachers for their children, because we are able to build in them our personal values through our teaching.

Home-schooling Clarissa enabled me to discover her strengths and weaknesses, as well. I became more involved in my child's education, and my daughter received a one-on-one education unmodified by the private setting, enabling her to make the most of her talents.

Teaching a learning-impaired child can be very frustrating. It is truly a case of E-G-B (Effort Brings Phenomenal Blessings). When I began to home-school her on years ago, I repeatedly taught her at home what she had been taught in school and in her speech therapy class. I continued to pray for my daughter's ability to speak.

As I write these lines, Clarissa hasn't spoken except to say "Papa," but that one word gives me every reason to persevere and

MORE BY DAUGHTER C-2

MOM Malu and Clarissa excelled in art

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ernesto G. Velarde

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Bootleg holiday

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD:

The latest Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF) finally hit its P600 million box-office target in 2010 due to a number of factors, foremost of which is the cessation of piracy during the movie's one-week run, explained DOMINIC ED., a member of the festival executive committee and vice president for [the debunked] of the Motion Picture Association Philippines (MPAP).

Industry stakeholders claim that bootleg DVD copies of the festival's eight entries would not be sold in the streets throughout the holiday season.

"In fact, pirated copies of MMFF entries made it to the market only on Jan. 23, three weeks after the end of the festival," related actor Ronnie Ricketts, chair of the Optical Media Board (OMB), lead government agency against piracy.

This is awkward, Ricketts said— "the longest time before MMFF entries were pirated."

"It's a perfect example of cooperation between the public and private sectors," Dy said of the joint efforts of the council and the board. MPAPC is an organization composed of distributors, producers and movie owners.

Communication lines are constantly open between the two agencies, relayed Ricketts. "We act on the tips relayed to us by the MPAPC. We have a system for information sharing."

Yo-Metro Manila alone, we caught 15 people who tried to record films using cell phones and other recording devices in theaters during the festival," Dy recounted. "We posted four deputies each to the large cineplexes."

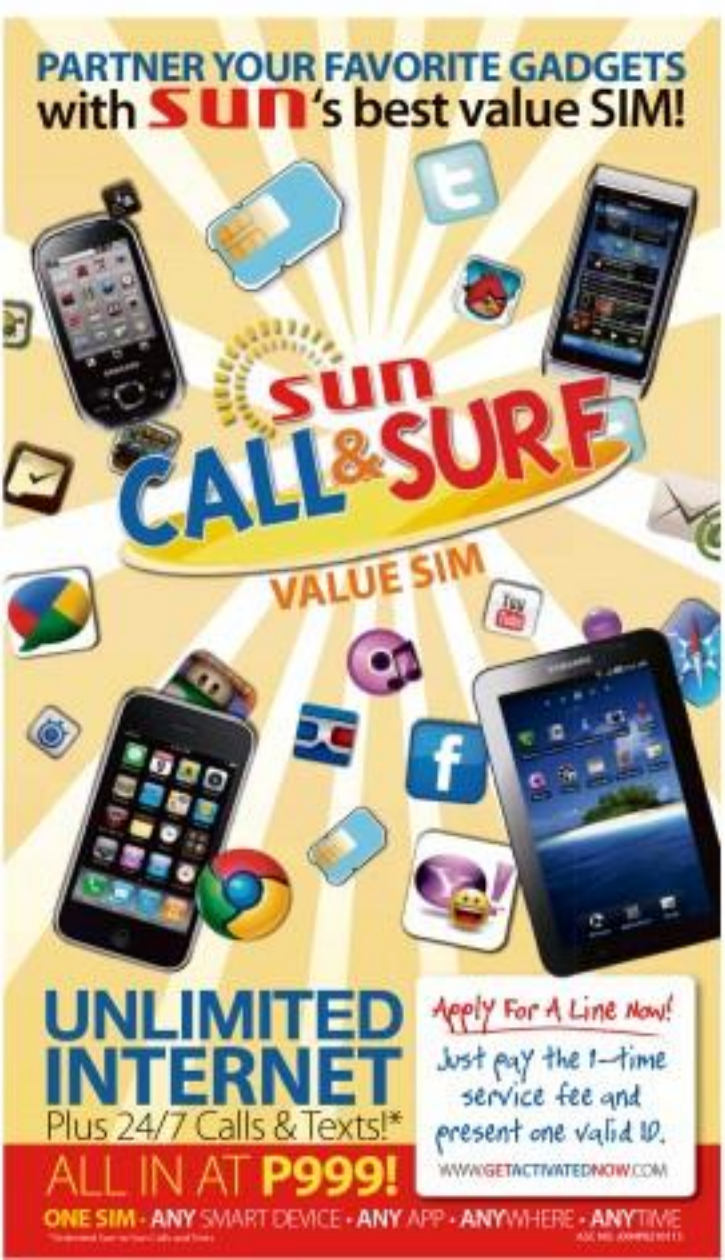
Ricketts and Dy pointed out that the passing of the Anti-Camcording Law last year equipped the industry with a weapon, a first line of defense, against piracy.

"It is now a criminal offense to record a movie inside a theater and anyone, from the cinema, distributor and producer to an ordinary viewer, can file a case against the suspect," Dy said.

Ricketts said he is coordinating closely with local government units, the police, and non-movie leaders.

"We complement our raids and other operations with an information campaign," Ricketts explained.

Ricketts doesn't want the public to perceive the board as a constable, depriving the poor of their food. "We good citizens must



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Bootleg holiday

From page D1

to explain to students the ill effects of piracy both on the movie and music industries."

The board is working closely with the Philippine Association of the Record Industry (Pari), too.

"Violators is going for direct helping the entertainment industry," said Ric Canadilao, president of the council.

Recently, the board intercepted pirated material valued at P300 million in Quiapo, Hickets reported.

"We need everyone's support and cooperation," Hickets said. "I always seek advice from the MPA. PC and Pari women, as industry insiders, they are the ones that are greatly affected by piracy."

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3: VANISHING ON 7TH STREET
3: THE MECHANIC
4: TANGLED JUST GO WITH IT
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3: MY VALENTINE GIRLS
4: 127 HOURS
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2: THE MECHANIC
3: SANCTUM (3D)
4: BURLESQUE

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2: BIUTIFUL SANCTUM (3D)
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4: MY VALENTINE GIRLS

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1: JUST GOT WITH IT
2: VANISHING ON 7TH STREET
3: BIUTIFUL
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5: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
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7: RESERVED

TRINOMA
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2: THE MECHANIC
3: VANISHING ON THE STREET
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6: 127 HOURS
7: JUST GO WITH IT

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LAUV: "One Two Wings: The Maine & Hanson Virtual Heroes"
3 shows this weekend in 1 Mall Cinema
February 17: Activity Concert: 4:00 pm

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Carmina: My twins need guidance now

By Marinell R. Cruz

ACTRESS-TV host Carmina Villarroel is convinced that her 16-year-old twins Cassandra and Maverick "need guidance now more than ever."

"In reform, they only had to listen and just to sleep. Now, they already have minds of their own," Carmina tells Inquirer Entertainment. "They are influenced not just by us but also by the people they meet in school. They need to be taught how to be God-fearing and respectful of others."

CARMINA VILLAROEL with husband Zoren Legaspi and twins Cassy and Mavy

Carmina, who joined show business when she was 13, says it is also important that she turns into normal lives. "They are their parents on television all the time," says the actress, now 33. "When they started doing commercials, their faces were on TV here—God's normal to them but not to most kids. Zoren Legaspi, [my] longtime partner, and I encourage them to do 'normal stuff' like going to malls or spending the weekends on the beach."

In spite of being twins, Carmina stresses, Cassy and Mavy are very different.

"Cassy's favorite color changes all the time, depending on what her cousins or classmates like," Carmina says. "She's very easy to please: just give her a pink accessory or and she'll be thrilled. Mavy is more sure of what he wants. When he asks for a Lego set, he'll even give you the exact number."

'Perfect couple'

Carmina says working with Zoren in the GMA 7 soap opera show "Love to Make, Love to Mix" has taught her so much about her partner. "He takes his work very seriously. Since he's sorta in hosting, he really tries to learn about it seriously so he can."

She is thrilled to hear people say they are the perfect couple. "We don't have pretensions. Of course, we're really very horsey and opinionated. On the show, we don't always follow the script. We don't mind making fun of ourselves."

"Love is like tres..." she says with a laugh. "Love is like tres... three. Love is like three. Love is like three."

ENTERTAINMENT

Mogul's son eyes Pretty Starlet

PHIL Younghusband's priorities

PEOPLEPOWER are getting lumber by the minute: Pretty Starlet is the new lady love of Mark Mogul's son. No wonder JPE landed a plum project recently!

The big question: PEOPLEPOWER-spinning Handler got a commission for these lucrative deals? Deal or no deal?

RUSHES

Cute Idol's new look

There is something new on the face of Cute Idol, Inc. (CIDOL). It followed Bunky Pitoni's example and got a nose job, too.

How CI and BP are very well past for twins—ew! Actually, CI didn't need the nose lift. Maybe BP convinced Cris Jam do it?

Crabby mentality

Actor-turned-director-writer are not getting love from colleagues. Promising Filmmaker) gave the words of Arthur Dimaano: "I the Charlie dance, saying, "Who gave him the idea that he could do that?"

In Antonio, JP had a point.

Bruno Aurus is unconvinced of Action Director 2's talent and has been despising his critiques. Andy Bohagat SA is just jealous because AD2 managed to score some behind the camera—something he has yet to achieve.

Three's company

Years ago, financier Mobi witnessed a strange ménage à trois in a hotel room. BM shielded upon Bunky Javier in bed with Marlene Idol.

So, ten in Baguette dollars, SA was ousted asleep, while MO was reportedly whispering sweet nothings on the phone.

Manufacturing a 'hit'

Controversial Personality allegedly had a hand in manufacturing the success of a recent project.

CP supposedly "allowed" two potential admirers (in the same field) to support said project. Also, CP is said to have used relatives' considerable power to sway certain people into declaring the same project a "hit." Creative accounting!

Top of the Talk Shows

For those who missed last week end's TV gabfests (And why we are moved, if we are moved):

MOMENT(S) IN:

HELISSA Richo: John Dusmo: hopes he's making her THERE

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WHAT?
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OPENING THIS WEEK

Vanishing on 7th Street
Directed by Brad Anderson; stars Hayden Christensen, Thandie Newton, John Leguizamo, Jacob Latimore, Arthur Darkwright

Shadows grips the city and residents disappear mysteriously—leaving a few survivors in the dark. Bloodydisgusting.com's Brad Miska thinks it's "kind of fun ... and never takes itself all too seriously." Beyond's Jose Wolcking says it's "wonderfully shot in deep, bleak shadows." Dreadcentral.com's Steve Barton praises the director who "turns in his scariest experience since [his] debut."

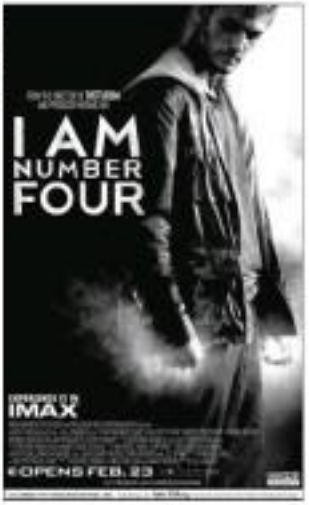
Just Go With It
Directed by Dennie Dugan; stars Adam Sandler, Jennifer Aniston, Nicole Kidman, Brooklyn Decker, Nick Swardson, Bailee Madison

Playboy Chandler Maxwell manipulates his loyal, pretend family to impress his dream girl Phoebe's. Rolling Stone's Peter Travers calls it "the perfect Valentine's date movie ... with someone you hate." Philadelphia Inquirer's Steven Rea states it "works off a flimsy screwball premise." New York Times' A.O. Scott writes: "All in all, the latest entry in the Sandler canon is not so terrible ... better than Custom Ups or The Bounty Hunters."

Unknown
Directed by Jaume Collet-Serra; stars Liam Neeson, Diane Kruger, January Jones, Aidan Quinn, Frank Langella, Stevo Stacy, Clint Dyer

Dustin Dowood walks up from a room to discover his identity stolen because of a minor conspiracy. Slantmagazine's Jonathan Dominick opines that "the story's not that simple ... It's about the human brain." Film.Bush.com com-

pares it to "Hegarding Henry" with an action agenda." Based on a novel by Didier Van Cauwelaert, it's part of the Official Selection at the year's Berlin International Film Festival. Opens Friday.



Mogul's son eyes Pretty Starlet

From page E1

• Phil Younghusband, asked about what he would give Angel Locsin: "What ever she wants. I promised to take the love of my life to Paris, but we'll see." (See?)

• Jake Cuenca, asked if his ever-hefty pay-out of John Revilla, who once wanted his answer published, Melissa Ricks: "Haven, you sure have?" (Ha-ha! Hah!)

• Jake Cuenca on his relationship with Melissa Ricks: "This is the happiest I've ever been, and I hope I'm making her just as happy. Kung ano man ang pinagawa namin, I wanna keep it like that 'cause it's working." (Ahem, what could that be?)

• Jolina Estrada on accepting ABS-CBN's offer to host "Happy, Yipee, Hurey!" with Randy Santiago: "Wanna dancing dahanan sa friends, ang saya-saya, kasama ang buong pamilya nanon—ang pagsasayaw ng tipaklong sayaw nakaka." (Dancing twinkle lang ang tinipaklo! Hahaaaa!)

• Jolina Estrada on the possibility of Kiko Rustia Revilla not relating to her his love team, and not attending her wedding: "Di naaaa